

Hafa Adai!

Hofschneider pushes creation of a CNMI Term Pension Plan. **PAGE 3**
GCA student receives appointment to US Naval Academy. **PAGE 6**

\$1

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NMI's 83 pct. federal match rate for Medicaid is now permanent

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Thanks to the CNMI's health partners as well as the efforts of Delegate Gregorio Kili C. Sablan (D-MP), the federal match rate for the CNMI's Medicaid program will now permanently remain at the current 83%.

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IN CRIMINAL CASE VS EX-GOVERNOR TORRES Prosecution opposes moving trial again, this time to August

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Office of the Attorney General, which is prosecuting former governor Ralph DLG Torres in an ongoing criminal case, has opposed another

continuance for the jury trial that has already been pushed back several times now.

In an eight-page motion opposing the defense's



Torres

request for another continuance, OAG Chief Solicitor Robert Glass Jr. essentially said that Torres has four lawyers to represent him and the conflict of schedule of

See TORRES on Page 4

'House will not be a rubber stamp'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Newly elected House of Representatives Speaker



Villagomez

Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) has assured the public that the House under his leadership

will not be a rubber stamp of the Palacios-Apatang

See RUBBER on Page 4

FOR TOURISM INDUSTRY'S RECOVERY Guam's Leon Guerrero, Palau's Whipps underscore the need for collaboration



By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Guam Gov. Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero and Palau President

Surangel Whipps Jr. have underscored the need for Guam, Palau, and the CNMI to collaborate for their respective tourism industries to recover after

the COVID-19 pandemic.

Leon Guerrero and Whipps, who were among the dignitaries at the inauguration

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FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero and Palau President Surangel Whipps Jr., seated second and third from left on the front row, were among the dignitaries at the inauguration for Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe Monday morning.

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Grocery prices that were up 12% in November are driving inflation even higher.

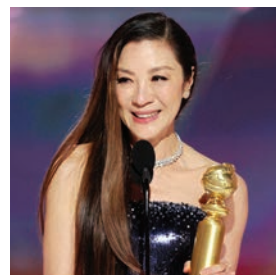
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NATION

President Biden was surprised when told that government records were found at his former office.

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LIFE & STYLE

The Golden Globes returns in a show that sought to rekindle its pre-pandemic glamour.

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Local

HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

USCGC cutter completes expeditionary patrol in Oceania

SANTA RITA, Guam—The crew of the USCGC *Frederick Hatch* completed a 41-day 7,100-nautical mile expeditionary patrol throughout Oceania on Dec. 23, returning home in time for Christmas.

Under Operations Rematau and Blue Pacific, this patrol countered illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing in the exclusive economic zones of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Nauru by enforcing applicable laws, regulations, and individual countries' sovereignty. The crew strengthened partnerships through established bilateral maritime law enforcement agreements, shiprider operations, subject matter exchanges, and community engagements.

"This patrol exemplified the operational advantage the Fast Response Cutter provides the Coast Guard in Oceania, displaying our ability to successfully complete fisheries enforcement and search and rescue missions over 1,800 nautical miles from home.

Mixed with fantastic port calls and impactful community relations events, the last 41 days were a testament to the *Hatch* crew's adaptability and diligence that made this patrol so successful. It has been an honor to sail with each of them. Making it home for Christmas is a great reward, especially after being away for Thanksgiving," said Lt. Patrick Dreiss, USCGC *Frederick Hatch*'s commanding officer.

The crew hosted students from high schools and colleges as well as community members during their port calls to share the missions of the U.S. Coast Guard and provide a look at the ship itself. They also participated in local sporting events and cultural activities. When departing the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the team took on an additional temporary crewmember, Staff Sgt. Gary Likiak, U.S. Army, and part of the local embassy team. Likiak rode along to Kosrae, which is also home for him—the first time he's been home in six years.

"Reinvigorating our bi-



The command of the USCGC *Frederick Hatch* hosts Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Kitlang Kabua, and her team while in Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands, on Dec. 5, 2022.

lateral agreements with our partners in the region after COVID-19 was the main objective of this patrol, and our successes with shipriders aboard and warm hospitality

received at each island both allowed us to achieve this goal," said Dreiss.

Of note, on this patrol, the *Frederick Hatch* team hosted shipriders from the maritime enforcement branches of the FSM, RMI, and Nauru governments. This activity was the first time shipriders could accompany U.S. Coast Guard crews in several years as Pacific Island partners resume normal operations after limiting travel as a COVID precaution.

The team conducted 16 boardings, issued five warnings, and found no significant violations. The fishing vessels were tuna longliners and purse seiners.

On Dec. 17, the *Frederick Hatch* crew, after departing Kosrae, enacted the newly expanded agreement for maritime law enforcement operations, conducting two boardings on licensed fishing vessels operating in the FSM exclusive economic zone.

"It was very fulfilling to have an opportunity to enact the Expanded Maritime Law Enforcement Agreement for the first time after watching the program develop over the last year," said Dreiss. "It provides the U.S. Coast Guard with another avenue to support our regional partners and continues to lay the groundwork for increasing Illegal, Unregulated, and Unreported Fishing enforcement in the region."

The expanded agreement builds on the existing bilateral shiprider agreement between the two countries. It establishes procedures for authorizing the U.S. to conduct maritime

law enforcement boardings on behalf of FSM to combat illicit maritime activity when an FSM law enforcement officer is not present. More specifically, the agreement provides a coordinating mechanism and process for U.S. law enforcement personnel to work with the FSM National Police, Division of Border Control and Maritime Surveillance to receive approval from the FSM to act under the agreement.

"This was an excellent warm-up of our bilateral relations and fisheries enforcement process following COVID. It was great to have local experts with us again and provide services to our FSM, RMI, and Nauru partners," said Capt. Nick Simmons, the commander of U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam. "The successful application of the expanded agreement now allows us to support our partners better. FSM occupies more than one million square miles of the Pacific Ocean and ranges 1,700 miles from west (Yap) to east (Kosrae) with the enforcement team in Pohnpei. This agreement allows us to help our partners overcome the logistics that limited enforcement in the past when it is difficult to get a shiprider out to the field."

The U.S. Coast Guard flags IUU-F as one of the top threats to our oceans and a significant regional destabilizing factor. The United States continues to emphasize the ocean's health and good governance, as evidenced by expanded measures to combat illegal fishing in the FY2023 National Defense Au-

thorization Act. Notable items include an expanded High Seas Drift Net Act, improvements to NOAA's Seafood Import Monitoring Program, programs aimed at reducing the impacts of ships and other vessels on marine mammals, and a federal ban on buying or selling shark fins in the U.S.

The U.S. Coast Guard regularly exercises 11 bilateral fisheries law enforcement agreements on behalf of the United States with countries throughout the Pacific islands. Shiprider agreements allow maritime law enforcement officers to observe, board, and search vessels suspected of violating laws or regulations within a designated EEZ or on the high seas. These law enforcement activities bolster maritime law enforcement operations and maritime domain awareness and provide a mechanism to conduct integrated operations within the Pacific. This expanded agreement is the first of its kind. It seeks to overcome the challenges of the Oceania region's vast distances while leveraging limited enforcement resources and the trust built between nations over decades.

The U.S. Coast Guard maintains strong partnerships with the maritime forces in the region through extensive training and subject matter expert exchanges. FSM, also known as the Big Ocean State, has one of the world's largest EEZs, with waters rich in sea life. RMI, located halfway between Hawaii and Australia north of the equator, is an archipelago of 29 atolls, five low coral islands, and 1,151 islets that shares maritime borders with FSM, Kiribati, and Nauru.

RMI's exclusive economic zone of 1.2 million square kilometers (463,322 square miles). Nauru is the smallest island nation and the third smallest country in the world, with around 10,000 inhabitants. Fishing is essential to their food security. FSM and RMI are signatories to a Compact of Free Association with the United States. They are Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Association members and party to the South Pacific Tuna Treaty, as is Nauru.

In addition to fisheries enforcement, the *Frederick Hatch* crew conducted a search and rescue case medically evacuating a 31-year-old Vietnamese fisherman to a higher level of medical care in

See HATCH on Page 4

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Hofschneider pushes creation of a CNMI Term Pension Plan

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) has introduced a bill that seeks to create a CNMI Term Pension Plan intended to benefit government employees who were prior members of the government retirement's Defined Benefit Plan.

Hofschneider stated in his Senate Bill 23-01 that prior members of the Defined Benefit Plan voluntarily withdrew from the plan since 2013 to save the CNMI government from bankruptcy and the retirees from losing their retirement benefits.

Hofschneider pre-filed the bill during their inauguration day last Monday, making him the first senator in the 23rd Senate to introduce a legislation. The bill is a "recycled" legislation as he introduced it in the 22nd Legislature when he was the Senate president.

The bill proposes to amend Title I, Division 8, Part 3 of the Commonwealth Code by adding a new chapter 13, the CNMI Term Pension Plan, in order to provide a short term retirement security benefit.

Under the legislation, the minimum retirement age is established at age 55 and that term pension is offered at a shortened period of 15 years not to exceed age 70 and terminates upon the death of the annuitant, whichever comes first.

Term Pension uses a pre-determined fixed formula to calculate the amount of an employee's future benefit.

Hofschneider said the DBP has been closed to new employees and a majority of government employees have withdrawn from the plan in order to protect the retirees' benefits and the CNMI government from bankruptcy.

Today, the only retirement program offered by the CNMI government is a voluntary defined contribution plan, which Hofschneider believes is inadequate to provide for the retirement needs of government employees.

Hofschneider recognized that active government employees who voluntarily withdrew from the DBP to protect the retirees' benefits and the CNMI government's solvency lost their right to withdraw the government's employer contributions to keep the DBP afloat.

He said at that time, the employer contributions of 37.39% was a substantial amount and a financial loss to those active government employees that withdrew from the DBP.

Hofschneider acknowledged the CNMI government resolved its obligations to the retirees in the DBP through an agreement with the NMI Settlement Fund.

He noted that the settlement agreement's primary purpose was to guarantee that the government retirees received at

least 75% of their existing retirement benefits.

The senator said in consideration and in all fairness for those active government

employees who sacrificed their future retirement benefits for the continuity of retirement payments to existing retirees in the DBP, his legislation

proposes to create a CNMI Term Pension Plan for employees of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches
See PENSION on Page 4

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18H5947	2018 HONDA CIVIC EX-T	\$23,458	\$16,995
17HS798	2017 FORD TRANSIT WAGON XLT	\$40,817	\$17,995
18P393	2018 NISSAN ROGUE SV	\$22,661	\$17,995
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22M032A	2018 HONDA CIVIC EX	\$28,840	\$19,995
22H186A	2020 HYUNDAI VELOSTER	\$29,120	\$19,995
8H054E	2019 HYUNDAI KONA SPORT	\$21,651	\$19,995
17P496	2017 MITSUBISHI LANCER	\$20,896	\$19,995

STK	MODEL	WAS	NOW!
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22M050A	2018 TOYOTA CAMRY XLE	\$27,721	\$22,995
18P416	2018 TOYOTA RAV4 LE	\$31,648	\$22,995
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Public comments sought on proposed project plans related to building Tinian divert airfield

The Division of Environmental Quality is accepting comments regarding a proposed Synthetic Minor Source Permit for Black Micro Corp.

The applicant is proposing to temporary use—under enforceable limitations—three

diesel generators, one impact crusher, one asphalt plant, and one cement batching plant to develop the apron and taxiway for the Tinian Divert Airfield.

Permitting such equipment will ensure air emissions fall

below major source levels.

The 30-day public comment period started yesterday, Jan. 11, 2023, and will end at 4:30pm on Friday, Feb. 10, 2023.

Written comments can be submitted in writing to

the BECQ Saipan Office on Middle Road, Gualo Rai, or emailed to deq.air@becq.gov.mp.

The draft Synthetic Minor Source Permit can be reviewed at the BECQ Saipan Office or accessed via the BECQ web-

site at <https://www.deq.gov.mp/news.html>.

All written and oral comments received by DEQ will be included as part of the permit application record and will be considered in any decisions concerning the

proposed activity.

Contact the BECQ-DEQ AIR Branch at (670) 664-8500/8512/8534 if you have any questions or would like to learn more about Black Micro Corp.'s draft synthetic minor source permit. (PR)

TOURISM

From page 1

ceremony for Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang last Monday morning, both said there are many areas where the CNM,

Guam, and Palau could work together to reinvigorate each other's tourism industry.

In an interview with reporters shortly before the start of the inauguration at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe, Leon Guerrero noted that they used to offer

tour packages for tourists from the source markets of Japan, Korea and Taiwan that included both Guam and the CNMI.

She said when Guam is successful with its tourism industry, the CNMI will also be successful.

Leon Guerrero wishes both

Palacios and Apatang the best, saying she looks forward to working closely with them to address some of the challenges in this part of the region.

"[We] continue to look at working together as a united Marianas," said Leon Guerrero, who was re-elected last

November, making her the first Democratic governor of Guam elected to a second term in office since Carl Gutierrez in 1998.

In a separate interview with Whipps last Monday, he said there are other areas that Palau and the CNMI can collaborate regionally in terms of tourism, including looking at how they can expand air services.

"COVID hit us all very hard. We've got to find ways that we can promote the region better and look at other

industries that we can also develop," he said.

The president said it's going to be exciting times as Palau and the CNMI try to recover and see how they can work together.

Whipps said there are many Palau citizens in the CNMI and they want to help them be more productive members of the society here.

He congratulated Palacios and Apatang for their inauguration and wished them the best.

TORRES

From page 1

one is not enough reason for a continuance.

"Torres is currently represented by attorneys Viola Alepuyo, Anthony Aguon, Victorino Torres, and Matthew J. Holley, and any of them should be able to handle the trial on Feb. 13, 2023," said Glass.

Glass filed the motion after one of Torres' lawyers, Victorino Torres, requested Superior Court judge pro tem Alberto Tolentino to move the trial from February to August because of his trial schedule conflict.

Glass argued that the defendant provides no reason why one of his other three lawyers cannot be present or represent

him at the February trial.

"The availability of the parties is not a determinate factor. The Commonwealth has announced it will be ready whenever the court schedules trial, including the now scheduled Feb. 13, 2023, date. Defendant has only announced that one of his four chosen counsel will not be available. Thus, it appears the defendant will have at least three chosen attorneys available to represent him at the Feb. 13, 2023, trial," he said.

"What is clear at this moment is that defendant has three other chosen counsel who have not presented any conflict with the date or stated such at the hearing. The purpose of the continuance is not necessary as defendant has three other chosen counsel to represent him," Glass added.

He said the Commonwealth would be inconvenienced by moving the trial date again.

"Many of the witnesses are currently appointed by the Torres administration. It is highly likely that many of these individuals will not be employed by the Commonwealth government when a new administration begins. Some of the witnesses have already tendered their resignations. This is inconvenient for the Commonwealth to not have some witnesses available because of changes in circumstances and the longer the delay until trial, the more likely important witnesses will become unavailable," he said.

In addition, Glass argued that the court would also be inconvenienced by another continuance.

"The trial is being overseen by a visiting judge who must take time away from his own docket in order to assist the NMI Superior Court. ... Because the judge is visiting, he must use one of the other judge's courtrooms, which means that that judge cannot use it during the time set for trial. With multiple moving pieces for the court, it is clear the court would be inconvenienced by moving the trial date," Glass said.

Back in April 2022, the AG's office filed a criminal case against Torres, alleging 12 counts of misconduct in public office and one count of theft relating to the issuance of airline tickets for business class, first class, or other premium class travel for himself and/or Diann T. Torres, his wife.

MEDICAID

From page 1

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. CEO Esther Muña shared the good news during a news briefing yesterday that Sablan recently informed CHCC that the Biden administration has decided to permanently keep the federal match rate for the CNMI's Medicaid at 83%, meaning the CNMI would only shoulder 17% of Medicaid-related costs.

"I did get a call from Congressman Sablan...that we're getting the 83% and it's permanent. That's obviously great news. It's been something that we've been fighting for—equitable funding financing for the territories," she said.

Essentially, Muña said, the CNMI government would now only have to shoulder 17% of medical costs accrued by the Medicaid program. Previously, the CNMI was shouldering 50% before it was lowered to 45% and the CNMI still could not afford it.

CHCC hopes that the 17% match will prove more affordable for the CNMI as it would come from the Commonwealth's general fund.

"The 83% is going to come from the federal [government] and the 17% is going to come from the local funds appropriated for CHCC. The reason why we opted to do this

is because, in the past, we've always struggled to find the funds to cover our match. It used to be 50%, then our match was lowered to 45% and that obviously was still very difficult. We are hoping that now, the CNMI can afford 17%," she said.

Muña said this is a great opportunity for CHCC to look at how it can better address health care access with the extra funding it would save with the federal government shouldering 83% of Medicaid costs.

"This is a great opportunity for us to plan better and also to really address the health issues of the CNMI and even for public health," she said.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, the Marianas' current 83% federal match rate, technically called the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage, or FMAP, is higher than it is for any state.

The FMAP was set in U.S. Public Law 116-94 in 2019, extended in U.S. Public Law 117-103, in a previous continuing resolution in early 2022, and again in another fiscal 2023 continuing resolution which was passed on Dec. 20, 2022.

The continuing resolution provided appropriators more time to draft an omnibus spending bill to cover the entire fiscal year which has since been passed, permanently keeping the FMAP for the CNMI at 83%.

RUBBER

From page 1

administration.

Villagomez said in an interview Tuesday that the 23rd House will not be a rubber stamp as anyone who has been following his political career knows where he's been in the leadership with the same political party of the administration.

"I get a lot of frowns [thrown] my way because they're like,

hey, the governor says this. I'm like, well, I disagree. But you know, let the votes fall where they fall," he said.

Under his leadership as speaker, the 22nd House opposed and criticized many programs and actions of the administration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and even investigated Torres' expenditures of public funds.

Villagomez was re-elected Monday as House speaker of the 23rd Legislature, which is composed of 13 independents,

four Democrats, and three Republicans.

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang won the November runoff election under a unified independent team.

Villagomez said Tuesday that he believes that he, Palacios, and Apatang have the same mentality in a sense that they are all "individual thinkers."

"We're all leaders and, you know, let's agree to disagree if we have to, and let's find a way to compromise and iron

out our differences and to accomplish whatever goal needs to be accomplished," the speaker said.

Villagomez said even if someone runs under the same party or under the same banner and just because those on the top say they do this and they all do it, then he can't see the point.

"We need to continue to work hard and think hard too for ourselves so that we come up with the best product," he added.

HATCH

From page 2

Pohnpei on Nov. 20.

The cutter's boarding team learned of the fisherman's injuries while conducting a bilateral fisheries boarding with an FSM Marine Police Officer aboard the fishing vessel *Ocean Galaxy* 195 nautical miles (224 statute miles) south of Pohnpei. The ship is a 69.4-meter (227-foot) purse seiner flagged out of Nauru. The fisherman reportedly fell 12 feet earlier the same day, sustaining a head and possible spinal injury. He was conscious and talking but lost

feeling and motion in his right arm and both legs, exhibiting severe concussion symptoms.

"It was an absolute team effort by every member of *Frederick Hatch* to medevac the injured crewmember from the *Ocean Galaxy* successfully. Witnessing each crewmember perform at the highest level after completing two boardings earlier the same day to help a fellow mariner was awesome to watch," said Dreiss.

Operation Rematau is how U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam supports the overarching Coast Guard endeavor Operation Blue Pacific to promote security, safety, sovereignty, and

economic prosperity in Oceania. Rematau means people of the deep sea. It recognizes the wisdom of the Pacific Island Forum leaders in that securing the future requires long-term vision and a carefully considered regional strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. Op Rematau reinforces U.S. commitment to working together to advance Pacific regionalism based on the Blue Pacific narrative. This action supports U.S. national security objectives, bolstering regional maritime governance and security.

The *Frederick Hatch* is the 43rd 154-foot Sentinel-class fast response cutter named

for a surferman and lighthouse keeper who was a two-time Gold Life Saving Medal recipient. The Service commissioned the ship along with its sister ships, *Myrtle Hazard* and *Oliver Henry*, in Guam in July 2021. These cutters are a vital part of the U.S. Coast Guard's enduring regional presence serving the people of the Pacific by conducting 10 of the Service's 11 statutory missions with a focus on search and rescue, defense readiness, living marine resources protection, and ensuring commerce through marine safety and ports, waterways, and coastal security. (USCG)

PENSION

From page 3

of the government.

He said in addition to employee contributions and budget allocations, additional funds can be collected and deposited into the CNMI Term Pension Plan from the government's right to col-

lect deficient employer contributions for all employers, including all government public corporations and autonomous agencies pursuant to a provision of the settlement agreement.

The senator said the Legislature may further appropriate funds necessary to implement and administer the CNMI Term Pension Plan.



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GCA student receives appointment to US Naval Academy

Grace Christian Academy congratulates Soleil Lamar, senior at GCA, for her appointment to the U.S. Navy Academy.

"This is an incredible accomplishment that few are able to achieve. Soleil has remained diligent and focused over the years to attain this goal and prestigious honor," said the school in a news release yesterday.

When asked about her appointment to the naval academy, Soleil replied: "I want to thank Congressman Kilili Sablan for giving me the nom-

ination and the opportunity to represent the CNMI at the U.S. Naval Academy. I strongly encourage interested students to attend the Summer STEM Program and/or the Summer Seminar/Summer Leaders Experience as these opportunities will give you insight into the life of a cadet.

"My process began when I was a rising freshman. I attended the USNA Summer STEM Program and I saw the Summer Seminar students (rising seniors) exploring the

campus too. I knew I wanted to attend that program next. For the next three years of high school, I worked on my leadership roles, physical activities, and academics. In my rising senior year, I attended summer programs at the three major academies: USMA, USAFA, and USNA.

When I was 5 years old, I began my taekwondo training at the Kukkiwon Blue Dragon dojo in Saipan under Grandmaster Jung Hoon Yun. I developed physical strength,

discipline, leadership, and responsibility. For about 10 years I trained and obtained a second-degree black belt.

"My Grace Christian Academy family not only provided me with the academic education to succeed at the USNA, but they also encouraged and developed my well-being. I had multiple leadership roles and a supportive environment. GCA has also provided me with the opportunity to participate in multiple athletic competitions including volleyball,

basketball, and track and field. Since elementary school, they have shaped me into a well-rounded individual.

"I want to thank the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Natibu Division. It is with their help and support that I am encouraged to attend the USNA. I appreciate the adult volunteers' leadership and their support and guidance on this journey.

"And finally, I want to thank my parents for their support and encouragement. Without their help to keep me on track and

push me to succeed, it would have been more challenging to accomplish this goal.

"And lastly, words of encouragement for those considering attending an academy. Focus on your SAL: Scholar, Athlete, and Leader. These are important components for all the academies.

"Once again, I want to express my gratitude to everyone that helped me accomplish this goal. I am excited to begin my life as a midshipman at the USNA." (PR)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Grace Christian Academy senior student Soleil Lamar shows her appointment papers to the U.S. Navy Academy.

Amata attends inauguration of CNMI's Gov. Palacios

American Samoa Delegate Uifa'atali Amata represented committee chair Rep. Bruce Westernman and the House Committee on Natural Resources at last Monday's inauguration celebration of Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.


"I look forward with enthusiasm to working with Gov. Palacios and Lt. Gov. Apatang, and the other officials present, on the many issues of common concern throughout the Pacific islands and the U.S. territories," said Aumua Amata.

"I lived on Saipan when



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Palau President Surangel Whipps, Jr., CNMI first lady Wella Palacios, CNMI Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang, Delegate Uifa'atali Amata, Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero, and Guam first gentleman Jeff Cook.



COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

INVITATION FOR BID CUC-IFB-23-012

Carbon Change Out of Granular Activated Carbon Filters (10 Sites)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for Carbon Change Out of Granular Activated Carbon Filters (10 Sites) in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The intent of the contract is for the Contractor to provide all labor, equipment, supplies, and materials necessary for the removal and installation of GAC and Gravel media replacement, disposal of spent GAC and Gravel media, possible sample collection, transportation, and the possible supply of gravel media, analyses of spent media, and additional waste containers/drums for disposal, if necessary. CUC requires the Project to be completed in 180 calendar days from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **December 28, 2022 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No. 17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies of the bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-23-012, Carbon Change Out of Granular Activated Carbon Filters (10 Sites)" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on January 17, 2023, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

A Bid Guarantee of not less than fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. A Payment Bond of One Hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.


This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 a.m. (ChST) on January 4, 2023** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Nicolette Villagomez, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer via email address nicolette.villagomez@cucgov.org and to Christie Sablan, P&S, Senior Administrative Technician - christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator



COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Main Office: Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport
P.O. Box 501055 Saipan MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 | Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-mail: cpa.admin@cpmports.com
Website: <https://cnmports.com>

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 01-2023

Opening date: January 09, 2023	Closing date: January 27, 2023
Location: SAIPAN	SALARY
Position(s): (1) Receptionist/Secretary (1) Ports Police Officer I	PL 5/1 to 5/12 (\$8.83/hr. to \$15.10/hr.) PL 7/1 to 7/12 (\$9.73/hr. to \$16.65/hr.)
Location: PORT OF SAIPAN	SALARY
Position(s): (1) General Maintenance III	PL 7/1 to 7/12 (\$9.73/hr. to \$16.65/hr.)
Location: TINIAN	SALARY
Position(s): (2) General Maintenance I (2) Custodial I (4) Ports Police/ARFF Trainee	PL 2/1 to 2/12 (\$7.63/hr. to \$13.04/hr.) PL 1/1 to 1/12 (\$7.26/hr. to \$12.42/hr.) PL 5/1 (\$8.83/hr.)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the **CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport**. Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport is no later than **5:00 P.M. on Friday, January 27, 2023.**

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin. Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.tenorio@cnmports.com or by phone at (670)237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

my father was the last head of government not of Northern Marianas heritage," she noted. "Although my parents are long departed, my family has a permanent tie in [the] CNMI as Northern Marianas blood flows through the veins of family members. Although the time flew by, it was a delight to see some of my family here."

Dignitaries in attendance included Palau President Surangel S. Whipps Jr.; Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero and the Guam Legislature's Speaker of the House Therese Terlaje; Gov. Alexander R. Naruhn of Chuuk, the Federated States of Micronesia; previous governors of the CNMI; federal and local judges, legislators, and others.

"No matter what policy differences there are between the political parties, those of us from the islands can continue to work together as a team on many issues, as we strive to ensure equal treatment with the states on key initiatives across the board," Amata said. (PR)

Poor offshore weather prompts responders to assist boaters off Guam

By CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER

SARA MUIR

U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia /
Sector Guam

SANTA RITA, Guam—

Three boaters whose vessel was taking on water off Agat on Jan. 4 are safe thanks to the actions of emergency responders on Guam.

A U.S. Coast Guard Station Apra Harbor 45-foot Response Boat-Medium crew located the 22-foot vessel *Machalek* about 15 miles off Agat and escorted the boaters to Agat Marina. Due to weather, they were taking on water; strong winds brought 8 to 10-foot waves.

"We appreciate the support of our partners to work together to ensure the safety of these boaters," said Petty Officer 1st Class Jon Pangelinan, operations petty officer at Station Apra Harbor. "It's important to pay attention to the weather. Regular updates are on the websites and social media accounts of the National Weather Service here in Guam, Guam Fire, and the Guam Homeland Security and Civil Defense pages."

Response action came after U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam Joint Rescue Sub-Center watchstanders received notification

from Guam Fire Department the recreational vessel was reportedly taking on water as they were returning from a fishing trip at Galvez Banks. The boaters lacked a marine-band VHF radio and had intermittent cellular service.

Watchstanders took immediate action to direct the Station Apra Harbor RB-M launch and requested additional support from U.S. Navy Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25. HSC-25 accepted the mission launched an MH-60 Knighthawk helicopter crew, and prepared to launch a second Knighthawk. Guam

Fire Dispatch also directed one of their vessels to respond. The watchstanders issued an Urgent Marine Information Broadcast requesting the assistance of any mariners in the area.

Within 30 minutes, the Station Apra Harbor RB-M crew was alongside the foundering vessel. Watchstanders canceled the UMIB and notified HSC-25 they could stand down. About an hour later, the boaters arrived safely at Agat Marina. The Station Apra Harbor crew conducted a post-search and rescue boarding and found the boaters had all the re-

quired equipment aboard.

"Our Guam Fire Department partners rescued two distressed water sports enthusiasts in Hagåtña Bay outside the reef line Saturday. A third person made it back to shore on their own. There were no injuries, but they were fortunate," said Chief Warrant Officer Sara Muir, public affairs officer CGFM/SG. "Winter storms in the region frequently create hazardous water conditions, so it's important to be aware and always respect the water here, especially if you are an inex-

perienced swimmer."

The U.S. Coast Guard and local responders always recommend carrying multiple forms of communication aboard a vessel, as cellular communication can be unreliable depending on location and distance offshore. These may include a cellular phone, VHF-FM radio, a satellite phone, or an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon or Personal Locator Beacon. Anyone going out on the water should also leave word with friends and family on where

they are going and when they expect to return.

Weather is also an essential factor to consider. A rip current statement and high surf advisory are in effect through Sunday evening for Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, in addition to a small craft advisory for Saipan and Tinian. The National Weather Service team in Tiyan provides regular weather updates on their website <https://www.weather.gov/gum/> and Twitter account @NWSGuam. (USCG)



U.S. COAST GUARD FORCES MICRONESIA

A U.S. Coast Guard Station Apra Harbor 45-foot Response Boat-Medium crew escorts the crew of the 22-foot vessel *Machalek* about 15 miles off Agat, Guam, on Jan. 4, 2023. Response action came after U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam Joint Rescue Sub-Center watchstanders received notification from Guam Fire Department the recreational vessel was reportedly distressed as they were returning from a fishing trip at Galvez Banks. Due to weather, they were taking on water; strong winds brought 8 to 10-foot waves. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class James Barnett)

MCS invites community to 'Night with the Knights'

After a two-year hiatus, Mount Carmel School is excited to invite AlumKnights and community members to the school's annual fundraising banquet, "Night with the Knights." The event is dedicated to celebrating 70 years of the school's commitment to faith, service, tradition, and excellence.

The "Night with the Knights" is scheduled for Feb. 4, 2023, at the Saipan World Resort Taga Ballroom, from 6pm to 10pm. Tickets are \$70 per person.

"We're very excited about the event and we look for-

ward to all our fellow AlumKnights having a great time. We take great pride in our island's only Catholic school and are willing to give back to a school that gave us so much," said 1990 AlumKnight and MCS business manager John Blanco.

According to Blanco, this year's "Night with the Knights" will include many activities such as a runway show, a school yearbook montage, raffle prizes, music, dancing, and more.

"After two super typhoons and a pandemic, it is time to celebrate the resilience

of our beloved institution," said Mount Carmel School president Frances Taimanao. "Mount Carmel School has been a home to so many and it's the memories and journey we aim to celebrate at our gala."

The event will also include the announcement of the 2023 AlumKnight of the Year, the 2023 Class of the Year, and other awards. These presentations recognize and celebrate the outstanding achievements of Mount Carmel School graduates. Criteria for both awards are available on the MCS

website, www.mountcarmel-saipan.com.

Tickets for "Night with the Knights" are \$70 per person. AlumKnights interested in purchasing a table for their class and family can contact Blanco at businessmanager@mcsknights.com. Tickets are available at the school's Business Office and can also be purchased through any Mount Carmel School employee. Cash and PayPal payments are accepted.

For more information, visit <https://www.mountcarmel-saipan.com/a-night-with-the-knights>. (MCS)

Federal financial aid available for NMC's spring 2023 semester

Northern Marianas College is encouraging students to apply for federal financial aid before the college's spring 2023 semester begins on Jan. 17, 2023. Qualified applicants can receive up to \$3,448 in federal aid.

The Federal Financial Aid program is administered by the U.S. Department of Education. Through the program's various types of grants, loans, and scholarships, the Federal Financial Aid program is the largest financial aid provider in the U.S.

Students can submit a FAFSA by logging on to fafsa.gov. NMC's school code is 015746.

To verify eligibility for Pell Grants, applicants can contact the NMC Financial Aid Office through email at fao@marianas.edu or call 237-6791/2/3/4. Applicants can also stop by the Financial Aid Office from 9am to 3pm, Monday to Thursday.

NMC offers several degree and certificate programs, including a bachelor of science in education (concentration in early childhood education, elementary education, rehabilitation and human services, or special education), bachelor of science in business management (concentration in accounting or with-

out concentration); associate of arts in business, associate of applied science in business administration (emphasis in accounting, business management, or computer applications), associate of applied science in hospitality management, associate of arts in liberal arts (emphasis in education, health and physical education, pre-engineering, social work, or without emphasis), associate of science in nursing, associate of science in agriculture, associate of science in natural resource management, associate of applied science in criminal justice, and associ-

ate of science in fire science technology. The certificate programs at NMC include basic law enforcement, business management, computer applications, early childhood education, fire science technology, hospitality operations, nursing assistant, and small business management.

A list of the classes that are offered for the upcoming spring 2023 semester can be found at www.marianas.edu. For additional information or inquiries, contact the Office of Admissions and Records at (670) 237-6769/70/71/72 or email oar@marianas.edu. (NMC)


CNMI DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT


INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB23-BECQ-42300031

SUBMISSION: FEBRUARY 13, 2023 TIME: 9:00 A.M.

**"SAIPAN OFFICE SPACE RENTAL – 3 YEARS
(OPTION TO RENEW FOR 2 YEARS)"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT THE HORIGUCHI BLDG, GROUND FLOOR, 123 KOPPA DI ORU & BEACH ROAD, GARAPAN, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB ARE DUE ON JANUARY 31, 2022, CLOSE OF BUSINESS AND CAN BE MADE TO ELI D. CABRERA, VIA E-MAIL AT eli.cabrera@becq.gov.mp OR PHONE AT 670-664-8500/1.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-275 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ELI D. CABRERA
ADMINISTRATOR, BECQ

/S/ VIVIAN M. LIZAMA
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS


**A Northern Mariana Islands Social Service
JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT**

(1) PART-TIME SHELTER WORKER

For more information, job description and an application, visit the Karidat main office at the Sister Remedios Community Center, Chalan Kanoa.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED: A complete application form, copy of diploma/degree, resume/bio-data; current police clearance within 6 months and a copy of a valid CNMI Driver's license.

NO PHONE INQUIRIES PLEASE.
CLOSING DATE: FRIDAY, JANUARY 20, 2023 AT 4:00 PM.

NEW WAVE DENTAL

Dental Assistant Needed Renewal (1) Full-Time

New Wave Dental is looking for one employee to work as Dental Assistant. Must have (12) twelve months experience in dental assisting. Applicants must have knowledge in dental procedure and dental terminology and be familiar with CDT Code and Nomenclature.

Interested applicants may submit their CV or Resume at the office location in Microbeach Road, Garapan Saipan MP 96950 during working hours from Tuesday to Saturday from 8:30 to 5:30. Interested applicant may also contact Dr. Michael Hall at telephone number (670) 233-3300 or (670) 483-4868. Interested applicant may also send their CV or Resume at email address newwavedentalsaipan@hotmail.com or mikehalldds@hotmail.com

Opinion

Hafa Adair!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

The newest US export: Anti-democratic insurrection

The United States has long been a model for the world, inspiring people in other nations to throw off oppression and follow our path by creating stable, solid, democratic societies based on the rule of law, featuring the orderly and peaceful transfer of power.

So maybe it shouldn't come as a surprise that some Brazilians tried to take a lesson from the U.S. on Sunday. It was the wrong lesson.

Brazil's far-right election deniers rioted in the capital city of Brasilia on behalf of defeated ex-President Jair Bolsonaro, trashing that nation's seat of government and copying the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection and coup attempt in which President Donald Trump's lies about his election defeat culminated in the sacking of the Capitol by his supporters.

The violent spectacle marked an ignominious day for the South American nation, but it heaps shame as well on the U.S., which is in peril of relinquishing its role as a beacon of democracy and taking its place among nations for which election results are shaky, and the real decisions are handed over to mobs and the autocrats or shadowy cabals that try to manipulate them.

Two years out from the U.S. insurrection, following the in-depth hearings and report of the House select committee investigating the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol, the evidence shows that then-President Trump compounded his blatantly false claims that he was denied reelection because of voter fraud with plans to overturn the vote and retain office.

The what-ifs are chilling. Evidence presented to the committee shows that Trump weighed plans to install Justice Department officials who would falsely declare there were voting irregularities. He was asked to consider declaring martial law and collect voting machines. He invited his supporters to Washington and, knowing that many were armed, told them to go to the Capitol. He watched the rioting for more than three hours before telling his supporters to stop. Vice President Mike Pence and members of Congress were in danger.

In Brazil, Bolsonaro didn't quite deny that he was defeated by Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in the Oct. 30 election, and he agreed to cede the office to his rival on time, on Jan. 1. But he did follow the Trump template by arguing that the vote was rigged or at least unreliable.

Unlike Trump, he wasn't on hand for the attack. He was in Trump's home state of Florida.

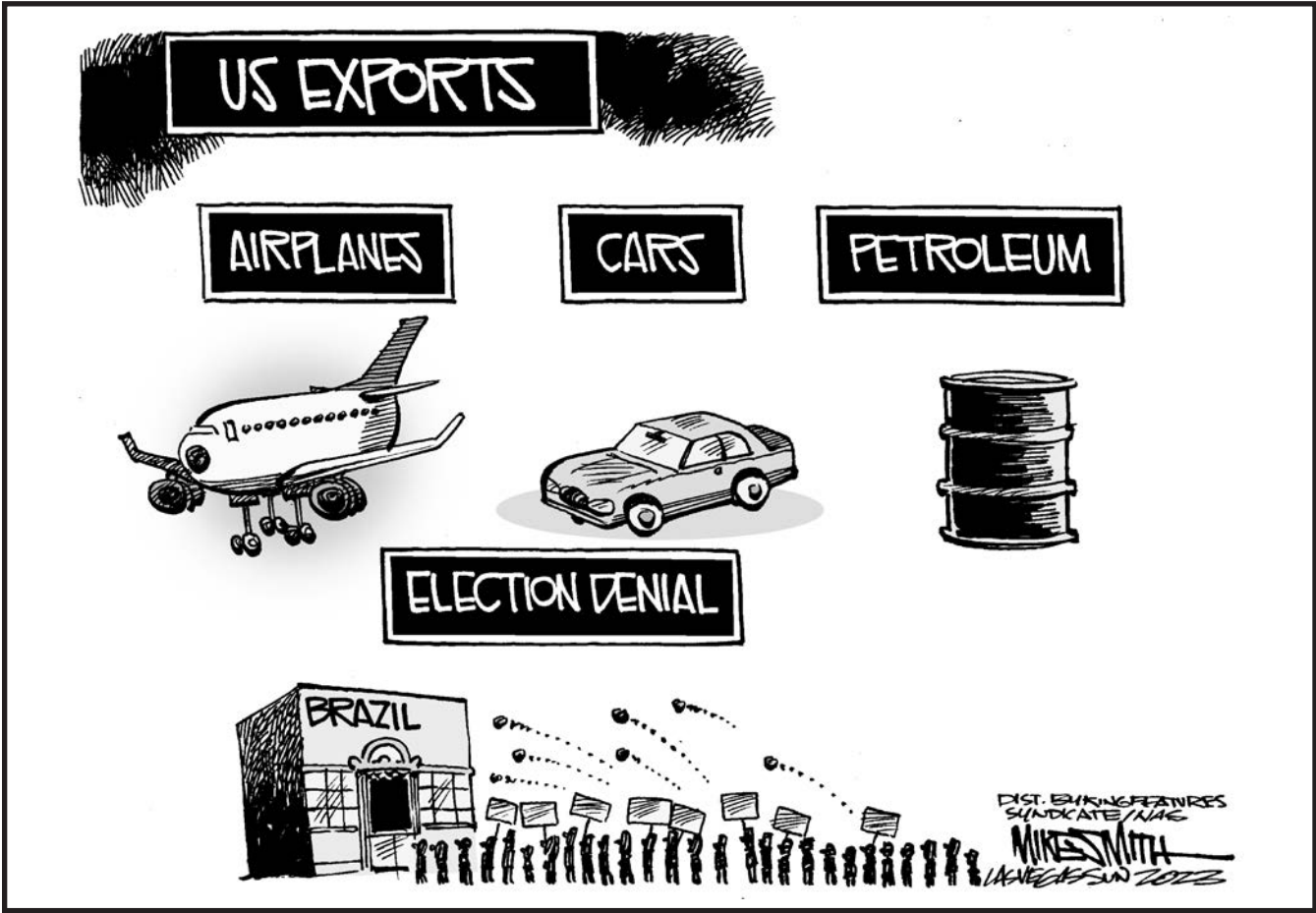
But those are cosmetic differences. It's as if Brazil's rioters thought, "Well, if North Americans can believe what they want despite the facts, and act on it, why shouldn't we?"

So far, despite the House committee findings, and the prosecution of nearly 1,000 people, neither Trump nor any of his team has been held to answer for the Jan. 6 attack.

If they are held accountable, perhaps the next set of election deniers and insurrectionists elsewhere in the world will be dissuaded by an American model that, when push comes to shove, holds perpetrators to the rule of law.

And if not, maybe the U.S. will once again be the world's most imitated nation. But not in a good way.

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American and British conservatives are frozen in failure

For the past few years, the U.S. and the U.K. have followed strikingly similar political trajectories. Against all odds, populist uprisings captured both countries' conservative parties, secured power and embarked on projects of national transformation. These efforts went badly (to put it generously), and in due course support for the rebellions subsided.

Lately voters have been calling for a rethink. In both countries, this is proving harder than you'd suppose.

In 2016, Americans stunned the world—and in many respects themselves—by electing Donald Trump president. That was a few months after Brits somehow voted to leave the European Union. Then, just as Trump rose to power on his promise to "Make America Great Again," Boris Johnson became prime minister largely by promising to "Get Brexit Done." Neither plan has worked to voters' satisfaction.

In 2020, after four years of making America great by setting people at each other's throats, Trump lost to Joe Biden (not the most formidable opponent). In the recent midterm elections, Trump's interventions crippled the Republican Party. The U.K., meanwhile, has gone from one calamity (Johnson) to the next (Liz Truss). Its economy is now setting records for poor performance, and support for the Tories' historic project has collapsed.

Yet conservatives in both countries are finding the revolutions of 2016 difficult to reverse. Trump is now such a liability that Democrats must be longing to see him nominated in 2024. Republicans, though acquainted with the same polling data, aren't certain to ditch him. In the same way, Britain's Tories know that Brexit has failed and they must mitigate the damage. But they can't bring themselves to say it. Everything's going to plan, they insist. New opportunities abound and "Global Britain" is on track to succeed.

The problem isn't just that it's hard to own your mistakes. When a political party sees it needs a new direction, a change of leadership is often enough. There's usually no need for explicit apologies. And shifts of direction don't always have to be dramatic—or substantive, for that matter.

There's no need for Republicans to renounce their platform, for example, because at the moment they don't have one. The electorate mainly just wants to move on from Trump's exhausting provocations, ignorance, vanity and impropriety.

The Tories are in a tougher spot. Unfortunately, they do have policies, and if the U.K.'s prospects are to improve, these have to change. But the Brexit error can't be undone. Even in the unlikely event that Britain asked to rejoin the EU, for the foreseeable future the union won't want it back. For now the U.K.'s

By **CLIVE CROOK**
Bloomberg Opinion

Clive Crook is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist and member of the editorial board covering economics. Previously, he was deputy editor of the Economist and chief Washington commentator for the Financial Times.



only recourse is maximum economic integration as a non-member—through arrangements such as those the EU has granted to Switzerland, Norway and other neighbors. This means acting as supplicant. The Tories wouldn't be able to disguise it, and the EU is unlikely to help them out.

At least Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, who took office in October, is adjusting the tone—less strutting, more practical. Relations have warmed slightly and prospects for a deal over Johnson's troublesome Northern Ireland protocol seem to be improving.

But a much bolder change of course is needed, and there's no sign of it. The Tories still haven't dumped the idea of letting all of Britain's EU-derived laws sunset at the end of this year, unless they've been reviewed and adjusted in the meantime. U.K. companies are furious over the additional uncertainty this threat—which has no apparent purpose—will impose on their operations. But the policy hasn't yet changed.

In both the U.S. and the U.K., conservatives seem frozen in these losing and destructive postures. And the reasons are the same: Both parties are still at the mercy of extremists.

Angry Trumpists and Brexit true believers have lost not only the argument but also much of the electoral support they used to command. Still, they aren't going away. Both parties lack leaders with the guts and the wit to defeat the extremists, whose energy shows no signs of abating. Last week's fiasco over electing a new Republican speaker of the House of Representatives illustrates the scale of the problem. Trump, if you can believe it, called for compromise; his rebellious followers weren't impressed.

Former Republican Sen. Ben Sasse of Nebraska, who just resigned to become president of the University of Florida, gave his farewell address last week. The most important divide in America, he said, is not about policy, or red versus blue: "It's pluralist versus political zealot." This is true, and not just of the U.S. Zealots have energy, and energy drives politics. The results speak for themselves.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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Don't turn away from the rising tide of political violence in America

On the Friday in October when David DePape burst into the house where 82-year-old Paul Pelosi was sleeping and allegedly beat him with a hammer, fracturing his skull, most Americans were shocked, horrified and disgusted.

Pelosi was brutally assaulted in what prosecutors have called a politically motivated attempt to capture, kidnap and torture his wife, Nancy, then the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.

But should we have been shocked? I don't think so. It was entirely in keeping with our current political climate, the bitter, polarized culture that has been teetering on the tense edge of violence for years. And it was far from unprecedented.

Only a few months earlier, in August, the novelist Salman Rushdie was violently attacked not in Iran or Pakistan, but in upstate New York. A 24-year-old man named Hadi Matar stormed the stage where Rushdie was to speak and allegedly stabbed the 75-year-old author more than a dozen times in front of the audience, presumably as punishment for what Rushdie has written about Islam.

The attack left Rushdie blind in one eye, unable to use one of his hands and wounded in his neck, chest and torso.

Before that, in June, an armed man was arrested outside Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh's house in Maryland. He was charged with "attempts to kidnap or murder" the justice.

As usual with the fast-moving American news cycle, these three unrelated incidents captured our attention for a few days. Then the world moved on.

But they shouldn't be allowed to fade so quickly. Because they aren't merely the isolated acts of deranged individuals. They're part of a wave of political violence that has been spreading through the country. That's something we have to face up to as we take stock of the year that just ended.

And it's not like it just appeared out of nowhere in 2022. The Anti-Defamation League said last February that 443 people had been killed by extremists in the U.S. over the previous 10 years. That doesn't count mob violence, death threats, kidnapping plots or individual acts of less-than-lethal assault. There were 10 times as many threats against members of

Congress in 2021 as there were in 2016. Local public officials increasingly say they fear for their safety.

Of course, we've always had political violence in America. It goes back to the anti-tax mobs of the Whiskey Rebellion during George Washington's presidency, the assassination of President Lincoln by John Wilkes Booth in 1865 and the assassination of President McKinley by an anarchist in 1901.

Over the years, America has experienced violence related to slavery, immigration, the military draft and anti-Catholic sentiment. The country was particularly scarred by the scourge of anti-Black lynching.

More recently, in the tumultuous 1960s, the assassinations of President Kennedy and his brother Robert, as well as of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, shocked the nation, as did violence from militant groups on the left such as the Weather Underground in the early 1970s.

In 1995, 168 people were killed in Oklahoma City, when a right-wing, anti-government bomber planted a powerful explosive in a federal office building.

So political violence is hardly unheard-of, and American democracy won't necessarily come crashing down because a subset of extremists believe it's time to take matters into their own hands. We've survived it before.

But if we're to do so again, it cannot be sloughed off with the shifting news cycle.

This time, the violence is coming mostly from the far right. According to the ADL, 75% of those killed by extremists in the decade ending in December 2021 were killed by right-wing extremists. (Although there are certainly exceptions, including the shooting of GOP Rep. Steve Scalise of Louisiana at a baseball game in 2017 by a man with a grudge against Republicans.)

Many people who support violence seem to be fueled by grievance and economic anxiety, white supremacist ideologies and crazy conspiracy theories like those associated with QAnon. Social media has an irresponsible magnifying effect, sometimes provoking or normalizing violence. The danger is increased by easy access to guns.

It has also been fueled in recent years by former President Donald Trump.

Some analysts date the latest wave of violence to the "Unite

NICHOLAS GOLDBERG

Los Angeles Times

Nicholas Goldberg is an associate editor and Op-Ed columnist for the Los Angeles Times.



the Right" march in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017, where one person died and Trump praised the "very fine people on both sides." In 2021, Trump's false allegations of election fraud "provoked his supporters to violence" at the U.S. Capitol, according to the recent report of the House committee investigating the events of Jan. 6.

What else is driving this? Polls show that about one-fifth of Americans say violence can be justified to "advance an important political objective." In 2017 and 2018, professors Nathan P. Kalmoe and Lilliana Mason found that about 40% of Democrats and Republicans agreed that the adherents of the opposing party were "not just worse for politics, but downright evil."

DePape said that in targeting Nancy Pelosi, he was "fighting tyranny."

On the positive side for a moment, violence that had been predicted to coincide with the 2022 midterm elections didn't come to pass. When the results didn't go exactly as the right had hoped, there was no new "Stop the Steal" movement to speak of, no riots at the Capitol, no extremist explosion.

Trump meanwhile, is declining in popularity. Many Republicans seem prepared to move on from him.

But the underlying threat isn't gone. Even if Trump fades from the scene, the bitterness and sense of grievance that helped propel him to power continue to exist.

We count and categorize episodes of serious political violence to study the phenomenon and to buttress attempts to combat it. Now, as 2023 gets underway, we need to acknowledge the deep problems they reflect in our society, problems that must be reversed, not exacerbated.

Large or small, make life better for all pets on Change a Pet's Life Day

A parking lot is no place for a hamster, but that's where a kind child found Dizzy. He was out there all alone, likely dumped when he was no longer wanted. Dizzy's story has a happy ending: A PETA staffer adopted him and gave him a fulfilling life. But millions of other small animals who were purchased on a whim or as "starter pets" end up abandoned or severely neglected by people who are unaware of—or indifferent to—their needs.

If you already have a small animal, it's never too late to start doing better for them. Jan. 24 is Change a Pet's Life Day, and it's the perfect time to make adjustments that will bring your animal companion more happiness and satisfaction.

No one wants to live in a filthy house, so cleaning the animal's living space daily is a must, along with providing nourishing food and fresh water. Just like dogs and cats, small animals need plenty of exercise and playtime, so give them hiding spaces, toys and safe places to explore, and spend time with them daily.

All animal companions require veterinary care. Establish a relationship with a veterinarian who specializes in small animals and can guide you through specific requirements. All animals for whom sterilization is possible should receive this vital surgery to reduce their anxiety and stress and prevent breeding, which adds to the animal overpopulation crisis. Routine grooming, including brushing and nail trimming, is important, too.

Research your small animal companion's unique needs and develop a specialized care routine.

Rabbits are social animals with gentle dispositions and distinct personalities, and they should spend the day interacting with you. They can be litter trained and have the hop of the house instead of being cooped up in a cage. Rabbits feel threatened when held, so the best way to interact with them is to get down on their level. Another way to help ensure your rabbit's happiness is to introduce a compatible companion rabbit. Whether you have one or a pair, spend time with them every day and provide plenty of enrichment, including safe things to chew on, like a paper towel roll stuffed with timothy hay.

Hamsters are nocturnal, so give them a quiet space to sleep the day away. When the sun goes down, they need plenty of enrichment with room to dig, toys to chew on and places to hide. Large hamsters should have a minimum of 800 square inches of clear floor space, and dwarf hamsters should have at least 640. Avoid using hamster balls, as they are more frightening than fun, and provide a wheel large enough that your hamster's back isn't arched when they're on it. Unlike many small animals, hamsters require a solitary lifestyle, so be sure to provide large, separate living spaces.

Guinea pigs are just the opposite: Social interaction is so important to their happiness that in Switzerland it's illegal to own just one. So if your guinea pig has been flying solo, consider adopting another. Their habitat should be at least 5 feet by 2 feet for two guinea pigs, and you'll need to line it with comfortable fleece cage liners. Be sure to provide timothy hay, a gnawing log and fruits and vegeta-

By MELISSA RAE SANGER

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

Melissa Rae Sanger is a staff writer for the PETA Foundation, 501 Front St., Norfolk, VA 23510; www.PETA.org.








bles, too. Some guinea pigs enjoy having the tops of their heads brushed with a soft toothbrush so much that they practically melt.

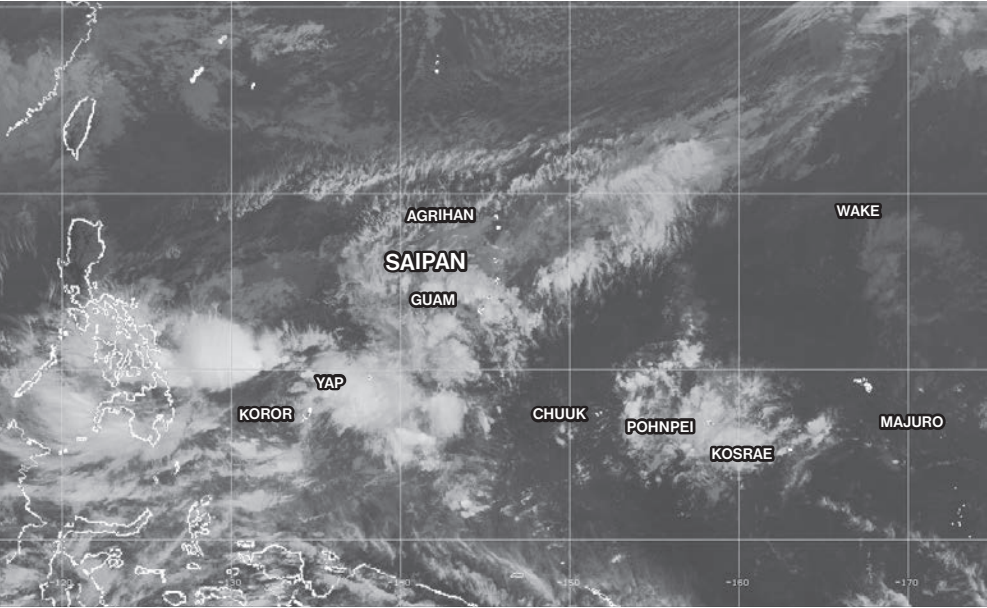
Rats require lots of affection and prefer to live with a companion. They love boxes, which are double the fun—something to chew on and hide in. Their enclosure should be packed full of toys, hiding areas and structures to climb, which will help them feel secure and keep their bodies and bright minds active.

There's no such thing as a "starter pet," so if you're thinking about introducing a small animal companion into your home, make sure you're ready to provide a lifetime of excellent care. And never buy animals from pet stores: The pet trade is rife with cruelty, as PETA's investigations have revealed. Adopt one (or a pair) from a shelter instead.

All animals should be treated with care and respect, and these tips can make a big difference to small ones.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY	
									
Scattered showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy		A 40 percent chance of showers. Partly sunny		A 40 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy,		A chance of showers. Mostly cloudy		Mostly cloudy	
80°	76°	80°	76°	80°	77°	84°	77°	84°	77°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 8:26 AM, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shearline is evident just north of Saipan this morning with showery weather and fresh northeast winds. Light winds are in place over Guam and Rota this morning with disorganized convection popping up on radar imagery. Tanapag buoy off of Saipan is up to nearly 10 feet this morning while seas around Guam are closer to 6 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	83° / 76°	
Palau	Thunderstorms	82° / 77°	
Yap	Thunderstorms	83° / 77°	
Chuuk	Scattered Thunderstorms	84° / 79°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	84° / 77°	
Kosrae	Scattered Thunderstorms	86° / 80°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	84° / 80°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:45 AM	6:04 PM
Friday	6:45 AM	6:04 PM
Saturday	6:46 AM	6:05 PM
Sunday	6:46 AM	6:05 PM
Monday	6:46 AM	6:06 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	10:18 AM	10:22 PM
Friday	-	10:52 AM	11:09 PM
Saturday	-	11:27 AM	11:58 PM
Sunday	-	12:03 PM	-
Monday	12:49 AM	12:42 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Rain	68° / 62°	
Beijing	Showers	41° / 32°	
Hong Kong	Showers	70° / 67°	
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	77° / 65°	
London	Light Rain	55° / 45°	
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	62° / 47°	
Manila	Mostly Cloudy	84° / 74°	
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	80° / 64°	
Miami	Sunny	77° / 66°	
New York	Mostly Cloudy	41° / 37°	
Osaka	Showers	57° / 41°	
Paris	Light Rain	54° / 48°	
Busan	Light Rain	61° / 55°	
Rome	Partly Cloudy	58° / 37°	
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	69° / 60°	
San Francisco	Rain	57° / 54°	
Seoul	Sunny	54° / 39°	
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	54° / 36°	
Washington, DC	Cloudy	49° / 39°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
4:46 AM	Low Tide	-0.13	
11:50 AM	High Tide	1.61	
5:47 PM	Low Tide	0.90	
10:21 PM	High Tide	1.36	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 1, 2023							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:46AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:30AM	7:25AM	Daily	PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA183	8:00PM	9:50PM	Daily	UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
				UA189	12:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam	UA189/174	12:40AM	8:46AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA184/174	10:55PM	8:46AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
OZ624/701	3:50PM	10:35AM+1	3,6 via Incheon	UA192/174	10:40PM	8:46AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
				OZ704/623	11:50PM	2:20PM+1	2, 5 via Incheon
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	3:15AM	6:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7	OZ623	9:00AM	2:20PM	3, 6
OZ624	3:50PM	7:40PM	3, 6	7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily	TW307	8:45PM	2:15AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

MARIANAS SOUTHERN AIRWAYS					
INITIAL DAILY FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 18, 2022					
SAIPAN TO TINIAN			TINIAN TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:00 A.M.	7:15 A.M.	(Except Sundays)	7:35 A.M.	7:50 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
9:50 A.M.	10:05 A.M.		10:25 A.M.	10:40 A.M.	
4:00 P.M.	4:15 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)	4:35 P.M.	4:50 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)
SAIPAN TO ROTA			ROTA TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
8:10 A.M.	8:40 A.M.		9:00 A.M.	9:30 A.M.	
1:45 P.M.	2:15 P.M.		2:35 P.M.	3:05 P.M.	
SAIPAN TO GUAM			GUAM TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
11:10 A.M.	12:00 P.M.		12:30 P.M.	1:20 P.M.	
5:15 P.M.	6:05 P.M.		6:40 P.M.	7:30 P.M.	

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

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Business

Soaring US egg prices put pressure on consumers, businesses

OMAHA, Neb. (AP)—Chickens may not be able to fly very far, but the price of eggs is soaring.

A lingering bird flu outbreak, combined with soaring feed, fuel and labor costs, has led to U.S. egg prices more than doubling over the past year, and hatched a lot of sticker shock on grocery aisles.

The national average price for a dozen eggs hit \$3.59 in November, up from \$1.72 a year earlier, according to the latest government data. That's putting stress on consumer budgets and the bottom lines of restaurants, bakeries and other food producers that rely heavily on eggs.

Grocery prices that were up 12% in November are driving inflation higher, even though the overall pace of price increases slowed a bit through the fall as gas prices eased.

But egg prices are up significantly more than other foods — even more than chicken or turkey — because egg farmers



A grocery store in Cheverly, Md., posts a sign to apologize for the increased price of their eggs, Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2023. AP

were hit harder by the bird flu. More than 43 million of the 58 million birds slaughtered over the past year to control the virus have been egg-laying chick-

ens, including some farms with more than a million birds apiece in major egg-producing states like Iowa.

Everyone who approaches

the egg case a Hy-Vee grocery store in Omaha, "has a sour face," said shopper Nancy Stom.

But even with the cost increases, eggs remain relatively

cheap compared to the price of other proteins like chicken or beef, with a pound of chicken breasts going for \$4.42 on average in November and a pound of ground beef selling for \$4.85, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

"It's still an inexpensive meal," Stom said. But the 70-year-old said that at these prices, she'll watch her eggs more closely in the fridge and try not to let them go bad before they get used.

If prices remain this high, Kelly Fischer said she will start thinking more seriously about building a backyard chicken coop in Chicago because everyone in her family eats eggs.

"We (with neighbors) are contemplating building a chicken coop behind our houses, so eventually I hope not to buy them and have my own eggs and I think the cost comes into that somewhat," the 46-year-old public school teacher said while shopping at HarvesTime Foods on the city's North Side. "For me, it's more of the environmental impact and trying to purchase locally."

In some places, it can even be hard to find eggs on the shelves. But egg supplies overall are holding up because the total flock is only down about 5% from its normal size of around 320 million hens. Farmers have been working to replace their flocks as soon as they can after an outbreak.

Jakob Werner, 18, said he tries to find the cheapest eggs he can because he eats five or six of them a day while he's trying to gain weight and build muscle.

"For a while, I just stopped eating eggs as they got more expensive. But since they're my favorite food, I came back to them in the end," said Werner, who lives in Chicago. "So I think for like a few months I just

stopped eating eggs, waited for the price to come down. It never did. So now I'm buying again."

Purdue University agricultural economist Jayson Lusk said he believes the bird flu outbreak is the biggest driver in the price increases. Unlike past years, the virus lingered throughout the summer and made a resurgence last fall infecting egg and poultry farms.

"Bird flu is not the only factor, but in my view it's the main driver of what we're experiencing at the moment," Lusk said.

But the president and CEO of the American Egg Board trade group, Emily Metz, said she believes all the cost increases farmers have faced in the past year were a bigger factor in the price increases than bird flu.

"When you're looking at fuel costs go up, and you're looking at feed costs go up as much as 60%, labor costs, packaging costs—all of that ... those are much much bigger factors than bird flu for sure," Metz said.

Jada Thomson, a University of Arkansas agricultural economist, said there may be some relief coming in egg prices in the next couple months because egg farmers have been steadily replacing their flocks lost to bird flu last year and demand will ease a bit now that people are done with their holiday baking.

But she said bird flu remains a wildcard that could still drive prices higher if there are more sizeable outbreaks at egg farms.

Farmers are doing all they can to limit the spread, but the disease is easily spread by migrating wild birds and the virus can be picked up on clothing or vehicles.

"But there are some things that are just outside of our control," Thompson said. "You can't control nature sometimes."

After years of surpluses, California headed toward a deficit

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—From a budget perspective, the first four years of California Gov. Gavin Newsom's time in office has been a fairy tale: A seemingly endless flow of money that paid to enact some of the country's most progressive policies while acting as a bulwark against a tide of conservative rulings on abortion and guns from the U.S. Supreme Court.

But just days into his second term, that dream appeared to be ending. Tuesday, Newsom announced California likely won't collect enough money in taxes to pay for all of its obligations, leaving a \$22.5 billion hole in its budget.

The deficit was not a surprise. Newsom and the state's budget writers have been sig-

naling for well over a year that California was sailing into economic headwinds. The news on Tuesday was Newsom offering his first plan of what to do about it.

Notably, Newsom chose not to dip into the state's \$35.6 billion savings account. And he proposed no significant cuts to major programs and services, including vowing to protect programs that pay for all 4-year-olds to go to kindergarten and cover the health expenses for low-income immigrants living in the country without legal permission.

Instead, Newsom plans to delay some spending while shifting some expenses to other funding sources outside of the state's general fund. He has proposed \$9.6 billion in cuts,

including canceling a planned \$750 million payment on a federal loan the state took to cover unemployment benefits for people who lost their job during the pandemic.

Whether that plan holds will depend on what the state's finances look like after April 15, when most residents file their state income tax returns. Newsom and legislative leaders don't have to approve a spending plan until the end of June.

"We have a wait-and-see approach in this budget in terms of being cautious and being prepared," Newsom said.

But Newsom appeared somewhat pessimistic about the future as he scaled back some of his ambitious climate proposals, cutting his much heralded five-year, \$54 billion

investment to \$48 billion.

Newsom tried to downplay that cut, arguing the \$48 billion is still one of the largest climate investments in the world and that the state would seek to recover some of that lost money from other sources.

Still, it was enough of a cut to anger some climate groups who had been heartened by the state's commitment to combating climate change in recent budgets.

"We have to sustain our commitment to climate action every year. This proposed budget doesn't do that," said Mary Creasman, CEO of California Environmental Voters. "To further delay these investments will further compound the climate crisis and the cost of inaction will be far worse."

BUSINESS BRIEFS

US will require detailed safety plans at charter airlines

WASHINGTON (AP)—Federal officials said Tuesday they will require charter airlines, air-tour operators and plane manufacturers to develop detailed systems for identifying potential safety problems before accidents occur.

The Federal Aviation Administration said safety-management systems have made travel on large airlines safer since their adoption was required in 2018.

"Expanding safety management systems to other players in the aviation industry will reduce accidents and

incidents and save lives," acting FAA Administrator Billy Nolen said in a statement.

The National Transportation Safety Board, which investigates crashes, has pushed for wider adoption of such systems. In 2020, Congress directed the FAA to require them for aircraft manufacturers after two fatal crashes involving Boeing 737 Max planes. The FAA said its proposal Tuesday went further by including smaller passenger-carrying operators.

Judges vacate \$5M Geico payout to woman who got HPV in car

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo.

(AP)—Geico is off the hook, at least for now, from paying a Missouri woman \$5.2 million because she said she contracted a sexually transmitted disease in the car of a man who is insured by the company.

The Missouri Supreme Court on Tuesday ruled unanimously to overturn a lower court's ruling that favored paying the woman. Instead, the state Supreme Court judges said Maryland-based Geico should have had a chance to weigh in sooner and sent the case back to the lower court for further deliberation.

According to court documents, the woman, identi-

fied as M.O., and a man, who were in a relationship, had sex in the man's car. She contends she contracted HPV, human papillomavirus, because the man did not tell her he had the disease. HPV can cause cervical cancer, certain other cancers and genital warts.

In February 2021, M.O. notified Geico she planned to seek a \$1 million insurance settlement against the man. She argued the man's auto insurance provided coverage for her injuries and losses.

The insurance company refused the settlement, saying the woman's claim did not occur because of normal use of the vehicle, according

to court documents.

Boeing orders rise to 4-year high but still trail Airbus

Boeing took more than 200 net orders for passenger airplanes in December to complete its best year since 2018, but it failed again to catch up with European manufacturer Airbus in orders and aircraft deliveries.

Airbus reported Tuesday that it took orders for 820 planes in all of 2022, after subtracting cancellations, and it delivered 661 to airlines and other customers. Those numbers topped Boeing's 774 orders and 480 deliveries.

The battle for supremacy in aircraft manufacturing has

been a one-sided affair in recent years, as Boeing was dragged down by two deadly crashes of its best-selling plane, the 737 Max, and with production flaws that halted shipments of a larger plane, the 787. The latest numbers showed Boeing closing the gap, however.

Both companies are struggling with shortages of engines and other supply chain issues that limit how fast they can build and deliver planes. The outcome is frustrating to the manufacturers—deliveries were below Airbus expectations—and to airlines that are eager to expand their fleets as travel recovers from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. (AP)

Nation

Biden 'surprised' government records found at old office

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden said Tuesday he was surprised when informed that government records were found by his attorneys at his former office space in Washington. He was asked about the issue after the top Republican on the House Intelligence Committee requested that the U.S. intelligence conduct a “damage assessment” of potentially classified documents.

Speaking to reporters in Mexico City, Biden said his attorneys “did what they should have done” when they immediately called the National Archives about the discovery at the offices of the Penn Biden Center. He kept an office there after he left the vice presidency in 2017 until shortly before he launched his presidential campaign in 2019.

The White House confirmed that the Department of Justice was reviewing “a small number of documents with classified markings” found at the office.

“I was briefed about this discovery and surprised to learn that there are any government records that were taken there

to that office,” Biden said in his first comments since news of the Nov. 2, 2022, document discovery emerged Monday. He added that “I don’t know what’s in the documents” and that his lawyers had suggested he not ask.

Earlier Tuesday, Rep. Mike Turner sent the request to Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines, saying that Biden’s retention of the documents put him in “potential violation of laws protecting national security, including the Espionage Act and Presidential Records Act.”

Irrespective of a federal review, the revelation that Biden potentially mishandled classified or presidential records could prove to be a political headache for the president, who called former President Donald Trump’s decision to keep hundreds of such records at his private club in Florida “irresponsible.”

“Those entrusted with access to classified information have a duty and an obligation to protect it,” said Turner in a letter to Haines. “This issue demands a full and thorough review.”



President Joe Biden listens during a news conference with Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at the 10th North American Leaders' Summit at the National Palace in Mexico City, Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2023.

On Tuesday, Rep. James Comer, the new GOP chairman of the House Oversight Committee, sent the White House Counsel’s office a letter requesting copies of the documents found at the Biden office, communications about the discovery, and a list of those who may have had access to the office where they

were found. The White House didn’t immediately respond to the request.

Haines agreed in September to conduct a “risk assessment” rather than a “damage assessment” of the Trump case.

There are significant differences between the Trump and Biden situations, including the gravity of an ongoing grand jury investigation into the Mar-a-Lago matter. The intelligence risk assessment into the Trump documents is

to examine the seized records for classification as well as “the potential risk to national security that would result from the disclosure of the relevant documents.”

Sen. Mark Warner, the Democratic chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, called for a briefing on the documents.

“Our system of classification exists in order to protect our most important national security secrets, and we expect to be briefed on what happened both at Mar-a-Lago and at the Biden office as part of our constitutional oversight obligations,” he said. “From what we know so far, the latter is about finding documents with markings, and turning them over, which is certainly different from a months-long effort to retain material actively being sought by the government. But again, that’s why we need to be briefed.”

Special counsel to the president Richard Sauber said Monday that after Biden’s attorneys found the records, they notified the National Archives and Records Administration — which took custody of the documents the next day.

“Since that discovery, the President’s personal attorneys have cooperated with the Ar-

chives and the Department of Justice in a process to ensure that any Obama-Biden Administration records are appropriately in the possession of the Archives,” Sauber said.

A person who is familiar with the matter but not authorized to discuss it publicly said Attorney General Merrick Garland asked U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois John Lausch to review the matter after the Archives referred the issue to the department. Lausch is one of the few U.S. attorneys to be held over from Trump’s administration.

Trump weighed in Monday on his social media site, asking, “When is the FBI going to raid the many homes of Joe Biden, perhaps even the White House?”

Republicans have just taken control of the House of Representatives and are promising to launch widespread investigations of Biden’s administration.

The revelation also may complicate the Justice Department’s consideration of whether to bring charges against Trump, who is trying to win back the White House in 2024 and has repeatedly claimed the department’s inquiry into of his own conduct amounted to “corruption.”

ACROSS THE NATION

Santos probe sought by Democrats over House ethics

WASHINGTON (AP)—The House Ethics Committee was asked Tuesday to investigate Rep. George Santos, the newly-elected Republican from New York who has admitted to lying about his job experience, college education and even family heritage, and now faces questions about his campaign financial disclosures.

Two Democrats requested the probe, saying Santos “has failed to uphold the integrity expected of members of the House of Representatives.”

In a letter to the Ethics Committee, Democratic Reps. Ritchie Torres and Dan Goldman, both of New York, said Santos also failed to file “timely, accurate and complete” financial disclosure reports as required by law. They said the reports Santos did file are “sparse and perplexing.” They asked the panel to investigate and “take appropriate action as soon as possible.”

Some Democratic leaders said Santos should be expelled from the House.

A spokesperson for Santos did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Santos has admitted to fab-

ricating several aspects of his life story and experience in his run for the House seat that he won in November, helping to give Republicans a narrow majority. Nevertheless, the newly-elected lawmaker was sworn into office last week alongside all other members of the House.

Court weighs tossing Boston marathon bomber’s death sentence

BOSTON (AP)—Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev’s attorney urged a federal appeals court Tuesday to throw out the 29-year-old’s death sentence because of juror misconduct claims just months after it was revived by the nation’s highest court.

Tsarnaev is making a renewed push to avoid execution after the Supreme Court last year reinstated the death sentence imposed on him for his role in the bombing that killed three people and injured hundreds near the finish line of the marathon in 2013.

His lawyers are now challenging issues that weren’t considered by the Supreme Court, including whether the trial judge wrongly denied his challenge of two jurors who defense attorneys say lied during jury selection questioning.

Mega Millions swells to \$1.1B after 3-month losing trend

CHICAGO (AP)—After nearly three months of lottery losing, will someone break the trend Tuesday night and win a \$1.1 billion Mega Millions jackpot?

Regardless of how long it takes, the odds of winning the top lottery prize don’t change, and they’re formidable at 1 in 302.6 million. But someone will eventually match all six numbers and win the jackpot, which now ranks as the fifth-largest in U.S. history.

The \$1.1 billion prize is for a winner who chooses to be paid through an annuity with 30 payments over 29 years. Winners usually prefer cash, which for Tuesday night’s drawing would be an estimated \$568.7 million.

Customers at Lucky Mart on Chicago’s South Side on Tuesday were hoping they picked a winner.

Toni Woods, a retired city worker, said that if she won, the first thing she would do was give her church 10%.

After that, Woods, 73, said, “I’ve got a list of people that need things, my family members, I would take care of them.” Then she’d go on a vacation.

Trump executive Allen Weisselberg gets 5-month jail sentence

NEW YORK (AP)—Allen Weisselberg, a longtime executive for Donald Trump’s business empire, was taken into custody Tuesday to begin serving a five-month jail term for dodging taxes on \$1.7 million in job perks — a punishment the judge who sentenced him said was probably too lenient for a case “driven entirely by greed.”

Weisselberg, 75, was promised the short sentence in August when he agreed to plead guilty to 15 tax crimes and to be a witness against the Trump Organization, where he worked since the mid-1980s. His testimony helped convict the former president’s company, where he had served as chief financial officer, of tax fraud.

But when he made the sentence official Tuesday, Judge Juan Manuel Merchan said that after listening to Weisselberg’s trial testimony, he regretted that the penalty wasn’t tougher. He said he was especially appalled by testimony that Weisselberg gave his wife a \$6,000 check for a no-show job so that she could qualify for Social Security benefits.

Had he not already promised to give Weisselberg five

months, Merchan said, “I would be imposing a sentence much greater than that.”

“I’m not going to deviate from the promise, though I believe a stiffer sentence is warranted, having heard the evidence,” he added.

Weisselberg, who came to court dressed for jail rather than in his usual suit, was handcuffed and taken away by court officers moments after the sentence was announced. He was taken to New York City’s notorious Rikers Island complex, where he was expected to be housed in an infirmary unit. He will be eligible for release after little more than three months if he behaves behind bars.

Weisselberg’s sentencing also marked the end of his career at the Trump Organization, where he had been on leave since the fall, continuing to make \$1.14 million in salary and bonuses, even as he was testifying against the company. His lawyer, Nicholas Gravante, said that as of Tuesday, the executive and the company “have amicably parted ways.”

As part of the plea agreement, Weisselberg was required to pay nearly \$2 million

in back taxes, penalties and interest, which prosecutors said he has done. Prosecutors recommended a six-month jail sentence, but Merchan said he settled on five months, in part because of mitigating factors, such as Weisselberg’s military service and stint as a public school teacher. In addition, Merchan ordered Weisselberg to complete five years of probation after his leaves jail.

Gravante had asked the judge for an even lighter sentence than the one in the plea bargain, citing Weisselberg’s age and “far from perfect health.”

“He has already been punished tremendously by the disgrace that he has brought not only on himself, but his wife, his sons and his grandchildren,” Gravante said.

Weisselberg faced the prospect of up to 15 years in prison — the maximum punishment for the top grand larceny charge — if he were to have reneged on his deal or if he didn’t testify truthfully at the Trump Organization’s trial. Weisselberg is the only person charged in the Manhattan district attorney’s three-year investigation of Trump and his business practices.

Asia

China renews threat against Taiwan as island holds drills



In this photo released by the Taiwan Presidential Office, Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen, right, poses for a photo with Johannes Vogel, vice chairman of Germany's Free Democratic Party, left, and Marie-Agnes Strack-Zimmermann, leader of the German Parliament's Defense Committee, during a meeting in Taipei, Taiwan, Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2023.

BEIJING (AP)—China renewed its threats Wednesday to attack Taiwan and warned that foreign politicians who interact with the self-governing island are “playing with fire.”

A spokesperson for China's Taiwan Affairs Office said the country was recommitted in the new year to “safeguarding sovereignty and territorial integrity” and “smashing plots for Taiwan independence” on the self-governing democracy that separated from mainland China in 1949.

“The malicious support for Taiwan independence among anti-China elements in a few foreign countries are a deliberate provocation,” Ma Xiaoguang said at a biweekly news conference.

China views Taiwan as a Chinese territory that must be brought under Beijing's control, by force if necessary. A string of visits in recent months

by foreign politicians to Taiwan, including by then-U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and numerous politicians from the European Union, spurred displays of military might from both sides.

This week, Taiwan's military is staging drills intended to reassure the public of its ability to counter China's threats ahead of this month's Lunar New Year holiday.

“The most important thing is to maintain the safety of our airspace and national security,” air force Lt. Col. Wu Bong-yeng told reporters at Hsinchu Air Base just south of the capital, Taipei.

The drills coincide with a visit from German and Lithuanian lawmakers—the latter Baltic state being a particular target of Chinese ire for upgrading its ties with Taiwan.

“We call on the relevant countries to ... cease send-

ing the wrong signals to Taiwan independence separatist forces and cease playing with fire on the question of Taiwan,” Ma said.

China has responded to foreign visits by holding large-scale military exercises seen by some as a rehearsal for a blockade or invasion. Beijing sends airplanes and warships toward Taiwan on a near-daily basis, often crossing the midline of the 160 kilometer (100 miles) Taiwan Strait dividing the sides. At the end of December, China sent a record 71 planes and seven ships toward Taiwan—the largest such scale exercise in 2022.

China's efforts to isolate the island diplomatically have left Taiwan with just 14 official diplomatic partners, although it retains robust unofficial relations with key ally the U.S. and more than 100 nations around the world.

PH court voids oil exploration pact involving China

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine Supreme Court on Tuesday declared unconstitutional a 2005 pact by China, the Philippines and Vietnam to jointly explore for oil in the disputed South China Sea, a decision that also brings other proposed agreements into doubt.

The decision by 12 of the court's 15 justices voided the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking agreement by state-owned companies in the three nations, which are among Asian countries locked in decades-long territorial disputes in the busy waterway.

Two justices dissented and

one was on leave and did not vote. The court did not immediately make public the full decision and only released highlights in a statement.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who took office in June last year, expressed willingness to revive failed negotiations for joint oil exploration with China in a meeting with his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, in Beijing last week.

The court ruled that the 2005 agreement violated the constitution by allowing the state-owned oil companies of China and Vietnam to undertake joint oil exploration in Philippine waters. The char-

ter specifies that “the exploration, development and utilization of natural resources shall be under the full control and supervision of the state.”

The petitioners argued that oil exploration in Philippine waters should be undertaken by Filipino citizens or corporations and groups that are at least 60% owned by Filipinos, according to the court.

Proponents argued that the agreement only involved pre-exploration activities which were not covered by the constitutional prohibition.

But the court said the accord's intent “is to discover petroleum which is tantamount to `exploration.’”

World

Russia intensifies Bakhmut attack

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—Russian forces are escalating their onslaught against Ukrainian positions around the wrecked city of Bakhmut, Ukrainian officials said, bringing new levels of death and devastation in the grinding, monthslong battle for control of eastern Ukraine that is part of Moscow's wider war.

“Everything is completely destroyed. There is almost no life left,” Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said late Monday of the scene around Bakhmut and the nearby Donetsk province city of Soledar, known for salt mining and processing.

“The whole land near Soledar is covered with the corpses of the occupiers and scars from the strikes,” Zelenskyy said. “This is what madness looks like.”

Late Tuesday, the head of the Wagner Group, a Russian private military contractor, Dmitry Prigozhin, claimed in audio reports posted on his Russian social media platform that his forces had seized control of Soledar, with battles continuing in a “cauldron” in the city's cen-

ter. Ukrainian officials did not comment on the claim, and The Associated Press was unable to verify it.

The U.K. Defense Ministry said earlier that Russian troops alongside soldiers from the Wagner Group had advanced in Soledar and “are likely in control of most of the settlement.”

The ministry said that taking Soledar, 10 kilometers (6 miles) north of Bakhmut, was likely Moscow's immediate military objective and part of a strategy to encircle Bakhmut. But it added that “Ukrainian forces maintain stable defensive lines in depth and control over supply routes” in the area.

A Western official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the Wagner Group “has moved from being a niche sideshow of Russia's war to a major component of the conflict,” adding that its forces now make up as much as a quarter of Russian combatants.

The Kremlin, whose invasion of its neighbor 10 1/2 months ago has suffered numerous reversals, is hungry

for victories. Russia illegally annexed Donetsk and three other Ukrainian provinces in September, but its troops have struggled to advance.

After Ukrainian forces recaptured the southern city of Kherson in November, the battle heated up around Bakhmut.

Ukraine's deputy defense minister, Hanna Malyar, said Russia has thrown “a large number of storm groups” into the fight for the city. “The enemy is advancing literally on the bodies of their own soldiers and is massively using artillery, rocket launchers and mortars, hitting their own troops,” she said.

Pavlo Kyrylenko, the Donetsk region's Kyiv-appointed governor, on Tuesday described the Russian attacks on Soledar and Bakhmut as relentless.

“The Russian army is reducing Ukrainian cities to rubble using all kinds of weapons in their scorched-earth tactics,” Kyrylenko said in televised remarks. “Russia is waging a war without rules, resulting in civilian deaths and suffering.”

WORLD BRIEFS

Cardinal Pell, who had sex convictions reversed, dies at 81

ROME (AP)—Cardinal George Pell, a onetime financial adviser to Pope Francis who spent 404 days in solitary confinement in his native Australia on child sex abuse charges before his convictions were overturned, died Tuesday in Rome. He was 81.

He was a divisive figure. He lived to see Vatican rivals charged with financial crimes after seeking to reform the church's finances. In Australia, he was a lightning rod for disagreements over whether the church had been properly held to account for historic child sex abuse.

Pell suffered fatal heart complications following surgery, said Archbishop Peter Comensoli, Pell's successor as archbishop of Melbourne. Pell had been in Rome to attend the funeral last week of Pope Benedict XVI.

“For many people, particularly of the Catholic faith, this will be a difficult day and I express my condolences to all those who are mourning today,” said Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

Bolsonaro eyes return to Brazil as US stay pressures Biden

MIAMI (AP)—The Biden administration is under growing pressure from leftists in Latin America as well as U.S. lawmakers to expel Jair Bolsonaro from a post-presidential retreat in Florida following his supporters' brazen attack on Brazil's capital over the weekend.

But the far-right ex-president may pre-empt any plans for such a stinging rebuke. On Tuesday, he told a Brazilian media outlet that he would push up his return home, originally scheduled for late January, after being hospitalized with abdominal pains stemming from a 2018 stabbing.

“I came to spend some time away with my family but these weren't calm days,” Bolsonaro told CNN's Portuguese-language affiliate in Brazil. “First, there was this sad episode in Brazil and then my hospitalization.”

Bolsonaro arrived in Florida in late December, skipping the Jan. 1 swearing-in of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who became the first elected Brazilian president not to receive the presidential sash from his predecessor since democracy was restored in the 1980s.

Bolsonaro is reportedly staying at the Orlando-area home of Brazilian mixed martial arts fighter Jose Aldo, a fervent supporter.

Policeman burned to death amid antigovernment unrest in Peru

LIMA, Peru (AP)—A police officer on patrol was attacked and burned to death by protesters in the Peruvian region of Puno as the death toll from demonstrations in the wake of the ouster of former President Pedro Castillo rose to 47, authorities said Tuesday.

José Luis Soncco Quispe, 29, was on patrol with a fellow officer in Juliaca, a city near the border with Bolivia and Lake Titicaca, on Monday night when they were attacked by a mob that later set fire to their vehicle, according to police reports.

Soncco's partner in the patrol car, Ronald Villasante Toque, said the men were “detained and physically attacked by some 350 protesters,” according to the reports.

Villasante was taken to a hospital in Lima with multiple head injuries after being beaten. He said he was unaware of what was happening to his partner.

Environment

UOG Guam Green Growth Conservation Corps recruiting 12



UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

Members of the Guam Green Growth Conservation Corps will be engaged in education and development modules for five months including work in renewable energy, zero waste, watershed restoration, endangered species preservation, agriculture, aquaculture, circular economy, invasive species removal, and more.

The University of Guam is recruiting for the third cohort of the Guam Green Growth Conservation Corps).

The five-month workforce development program is looking for 12 new members.

The group will be involved in weekly modules that will

help prepare them for a career in the emerging green economy.

Focus areas will include renewable energy, zero waste, watershed restoration, endangered species preservation, agriculture, aquaculture, circular economy, invasive species re-

moval, and more.

"We are excited to begin the third season of the G3 Conservation Corps," said director Austin J. Shelton of the UOG Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant. "This program is preparing our people to enter the growing field of



UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

The Guam Green Growth Conservation Corps members will have the chance to earn Continuing Education Units from the University of Guam and receive bi-weekly stipends.

green jobs and help create a sustainable future for our island at the same time."

According to program coordinator Phillip Cruz, G3 Conservation Corps gives members in-depth and in-person exposure to sustainable disciplines and work areas.

"G3CC members will literally get their hands dirty, and their feet wet, with the various activities in conservation and sustainability across the island," said Cruz. "Experts will mentor the cohort each week, giving them hands-on experience in the various fields."

Along with professional development opportunities, the corps can also earn 10 continuing education units from the University of Guam's Global Learning and Engagement program for ev-

ery 10 hours worked, up to 80 for the entire five-month program.

According to Cruz, of the 12 positions available, 10 are for Conservation Corps leaders who will receive a biweekly stipend of \$1,300 and two are for Conservation Corps supervisors who will receive a biweekly stipend of \$1,500.

Interested individuals can apply online at guamgreengrowth.org with applications being accepted from Jan. 11 to Feb. 1, 2023. (UOG)

UN says ozone layer slowly healing, hole to mend by 2066

DENVER (AP)—Earth's protective ozone layer is slowly but noticeably healing at a pace that would fully mend the hole over Antarctica in about 43 years, a new United Nations report says.

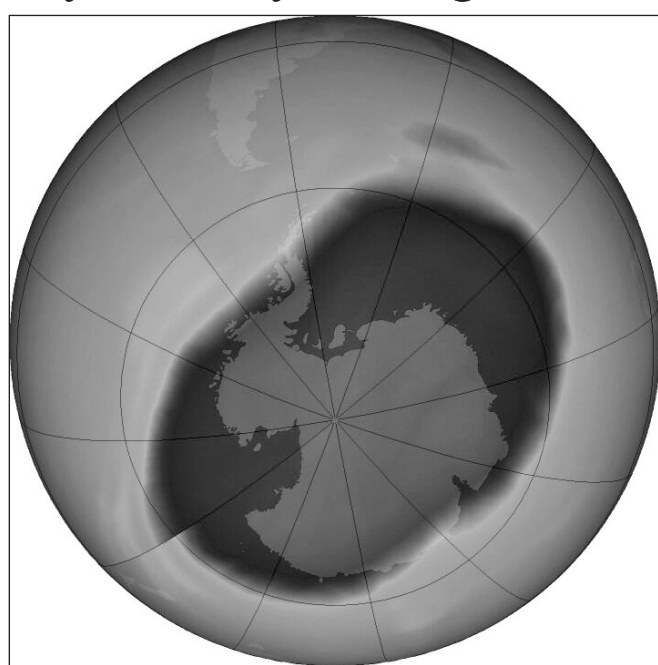
A once-every-four-years scientific assessment found recovery in progress, more than 35 years after every nation in the world agreed to stop producing chemicals that chomp on the layer of ozone in Earth's atmosphere that shields the planet from harmful radiation linked to skin cancer, cataracts and crop damage.

"In the upper stratosphere and in the ozone hole we see things getting better," said Paul Newman, co-chair of the scientific assessment.

The progress is slow, according to the report presented Monday at the American Meteorological Society convention in Denver. The global average amount of ozone 18 miles (30 kilometers) high in the atmosphere won't be back to 1980 pre-thinning levels until about 2040, the report said. And it won't be back to normal in the Arctic until 2045.

Antarctica, where it's so thin there's an annual giant gaping hole in the layer, won't be fully fixed until 2066, the report said.

Scientists and environmental advocates across the world have long hailed the efforts to



(NASA via AP, File)

In this NASA false-color image, the blue and purple shows the hole in Earth's protective ozone layer over Antarctica on Oct. 5, 2022. Earth's protective ozone layer is slowly but noticeably healing at a pace that would fully mend the hole over Antarctica in about 43 years, a new United Nations report says.

heal the ozone hole—springing out of a 1987 agreement called the Montreal Protocol that banned a class of chemicals often used in refrigerants and aerosols—as one of the biggest ecological victories for humanity.

"Ozone action sets a precedent for climate action. Our success in phasing out ozone-eating chemicals shows us what can and must be done — as a matter of urgency—to transition away from fossil fu-

els, reduce greenhouse gases and so limit temperature increase," World Meteorological Organization Secretary-General Prof. Petteri Taalas said in a statement.

Signs of healing were reported four years ago but were slight and more preliminary. "Those numbers of recovery have solidified a lot," Newman said.

The two chief chemicals that munch away at ozone are in lower levels in the atmo-

sphere, said Newman, chief Earth scientist at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. Chlorine levels are down 11.5% since they peaked in 1993 and bromine, which is more efficient at eating ozone but is at lower levels in the air, dropped 14.5% since its 1999 peak, the report said.

That bromine and chlorine levels "stopped growing and is coming down is a real testament to the effectiveness of the Montreal Protocol," Newman said.

"There has been a sea change in the way our society deals with ozone depleting substances," said scientific panel co-chair David W. Fahey, director of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's chemical sciences lab.

Decades ago, people could go into a store and buy a can of refrigerants that eat away at the ozone, punch a hole in it and pollute the atmosphere, Fahey said. Now, not only are the substances banned but they are no longer much in people's homes or cars, replaced by cleaner chemicals.

Natural weather patterns in the Antarctic also affect ozone hole levels, which peak in the fall. And the past couple years, the holes have been a bit bigger because of that but the overall trend is one of healing, Newman said.

'Ian, drought supercharged 2022 US weather extremes'

DENVER (AP)—Costly weather disasters kept raining down on America last year, pounding the nation with 18 climate extremes that caused at least \$1 billion in damage each, totaling more than \$165 billion, federal climate scientists calculated Tuesday.

Even though 2022 wasn't near record hot for the United States, it was the third-wildest year nationally both in number of extremes that cost \$1 billion and overall damage from those weather catastrophes, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said in a report issued at the American Meteorological Society's conference.

The amount, cost and death toll of billion-dollar weather disasters make up a key measurement, adjusted for inflation, that NOAA uses to see how bad human-caused climate change is getting. They led to at least 474 deaths.

"People are seeing the impacts of a changing climate system where they live, work and play on a regular basis," NOAA Administrator Rick

Spinrad said at a Tuesday press conference. "With a changing climate buckle up. More extreme events are expected."

Hurricane Ian, the costliest drought in a decade and a pre-Christmas winter storm pushed last year's damages to the highest since 2017. The only more expensive years were 2017—when Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria struck—and the disastrous 2005 when numerous hurricanes, headlined by Katrina, pummeled the Southeast, federal meteorologists said. The only busier years for billion-dollar disasters were 2020 and 2021.

Ian was the third-costliest U.S. hurricane on record with \$112.9 billion in damage, followed by \$22.2 billion in damage from a western and mid-western drought that halted barge traffic on the Mississippi River, officials said. The \$165 billion total for 2022 doesn't even include a total yet for the winter storm three weeks ago, which could push it close to \$170 billion, officials said.

Life & Style

At rehabbed Globes, Yeoh, Quan and ‘Abbott Elementary’ win

By JAKE COYLE
AP Film Writer

The Golden Globes returned to the air Tuesday with a red carpet flush with celebrities, comedian Jerrod Carmichael as a hesitant emcee and numerous trophies for “Everything Everywhere All at Once” and “Abbott Elementary,” as the beleaguered award show sought to rekindle its pre-pandemic and pre-scandal glamour.

Carmichael kicked off the 80th Golden Globes from the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California, with little of the fanfare that usually opens such ceremonies. He plunged straight into the issues that drove the Globes off television and led much of the entertainment industry to boycott the Hollywood Foreign Press Association after the group was revealed to have no Black members. Carmichael opened

by asking the crowd to “be a little quiet here.”

“I am your host, Jerrod Carmichael,” said the “Rothaniel” comedian. “And I’ll tell you why I’m here. I’m here ‘cause I’m Black.”

“I won’t say they were a racist organization,” he continued before sitting on the stage. “But they didn’t have a single Black member until George Floyd died. So do with that information what you will.”

On a soggy night following punishing, prolonged rains that have lashed Southern California, the first award went to Ke Huy Quan, the former child star of “Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom,” for best supporting actor in “Everything Everywhere All at Once.” A clearly emotional Quan, who had left acting years before directors Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert cast him in their multiverse tale, thanked them



RICH POLK

This image released by NBC shows Michelle Yeoh accepting the Best Actress in a Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy award for “Everything Everywhere All at Once” during the 80th Annual Golden Globe Awards at the Beverly Hilton Hotel on Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2023, in Beverly Hills, Calif. (Rich Polk/NBC via AP)

for his second act.

“More than 30 years later, two guys thought of me,” said

Quan. “They remembered that kid. And they gave me the opportunity to try again.”

Michelle Yeoh, the star of “Everything Everywhere All at Once,” also won, for best actress in a comedy or musical. The Malaysian-born Yeoh was just the second female actor of Asian descent to win in the category, after her “Crazy Rich Asian” costar Awkwafina, who won for “The Farewell” in 2020. “Forty years,” the 60-year-old Yeoh said. “Not letting go of this.”

Possibly Yeoh’s stiffest competition at the Academy Awards, Cate Blanchett of “Tár,” won best actress on the drama side. Blanchett, in production, wasn’t in attendance to pick up her fourth Globe.

Steven Spielberg, nominated 14 times by the Globes for best director, won the honor for the third time for his autobiographical “The Fabelmans.” The filmmaker began by thanking his three sisters, his late father and his late mother, Leah Adler (played by Michelle Williams in the film). “She is up there kvelling about this right now,” said Spielberg.

Angela Bassett, a likely Oscar frontrunner, won best supporting actress for her performance in “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever.”

“Weeping may come in the evening, but joy comes in the morning,” Bassett said, referencing the loss of “Black Panther” star Chadwick Boseman.

Best actor was an upset. Austin Butler won for his performance in Baz Luhrmann’s “Elvis.” The favorite in the category has arguably been Brendan Fraser for “The Whale.” Ahead of the Globes, Fraser said he would not attend because “my mother didn’t raise

a hypocrite.” In 2018, Fraser said he was groped in 2003 by longtime HFPA member Philip Berk. Berk, who is no longer an HFPA member, denied it.

The public school sitcom “Abbott Elementary” came in the lead TV nominee and took two awards early. Quinta Brunson, the show’s creator and star, won best actress in a comedy series, and Tyler James Williams won for his supporting role.

“It has resonated with the world in a way that I couldn’t even have imagined it would have,” said Brunson as she thanked the studios that backed her vision. “But let’s be real. I did imagine it. That’s why I sold it to you.”

Colin Farrell, who first won a Globe in 2009 for his performance in Martin McDonagh’s “In Bruges” in 2009, won best actor in a comedy in his reteaming with McDonagh and co-star Brendan Gleeson in “The Banshees of Inisherin.” Farrell thanked McDonagh (who also won best original screenplay), much of the cast, his kids and the film’s donkey, Jenny.

“Naatu Naatu” from the Telugu sensation “RRR,” “won best song over the likes of Rihanna and Taylor Swift. Jeremy Allen White of “The Bear” beat out Donald Glover (“Atlanta”), Bill Hader (“Barry”), Steve Martin (“Only Murders in the Building”) and Martin Short (“Only Murders in the Building”) to win best actor in a comedy or musical series.

Fresh off her dramatic “White Lotus” finale, Jennifer Coolidge spoke at length on the just-as-deadly risks of presenting an award on waxed floors.

After hype, readers get hands on Prince Harry’s ‘Spare’

LONDON (AP)—After weeks of hype and days of leaks, readers got a chance to judge Prince Harry’s book for themselves when it went on sale around the world on Tuesday.

The book’s publisher said “Spare” sold 400,000 copies in the U.K. in all formats—hardback, e-book and audio—on its first day.

“As far as we know, the only books to have sold more in their first day are those starring the other Harry (Potter),” said Larry Finlay, managing director of Transworld Penguin Random House. The final Potter book, “Harry Potter and the

Deathly Hallows,” sold more than 2.5 million copies on its first day of release, in 2007.

A few stores in Britain opened at midnight to sell copies to diehard royal devotees and the merely curious. Many said they wanted to form their own opinion of the book after days of snippets and debate on news sites and television.

“I’m excited just to hear about Prince Harry’s life from Prince Harry,” said Sarah Nakana, a surveyor who bought the book at London’s Victoria station. “There’s so much misinformation, disinformation about Harry and Meghan.”

The book’s myriad reve-

lations and accusations have already been splashed across the media. In the ghostwritten memoir Harry, 38, recounts his grief at the death of his mother, Princess Diana, his disputes with brother Prince William and frustration at the role of royal “spare” in the shadow of his elder sibling, who is heir to the British throne.

He lacerates the U.K.’s tabloid press for coverage he considers prurient, intrusive and sometimes plain wrong, claims his relatives were unwelcoming to his wife Meghan and accuses members of the royal family, including his stepmother Camilla, of leaking stories to

the media to burnish their own reputations.

Buckingham Palace has not commented on any of the allegations, though royal allies have pushed back, largely anonymously.

Harry’s exposure of bitter divides inside the House of Windsor—alongside details of his mental health struggles, experiences with sex and drugs and decade-long military career—has generated reams of media coverage.

“Spare” is the top-selling book on Amazon’s U.K. site and on Amazon.com in the U.S., and is already one of the year’s biggest sellers.

Wife’s baseball infatuation puts the squeeze on marriage

DEAR ABBY: My wife and I have been together 25 years and had an ideal marriage. She has recently become a dedicated baseball fan, or should I say, obsessed. She has season tickets and attends wearing her team outfit. She got a team license plate and scours the daily sports page for team news first thing every morning. She talks baseball with anyone anytime, including me, incessantly, despite my lukewarm interest.

At home on game day she has multiple TVs on, as well as her laptop and phone dialed to the game, lest she miss one second of play. She can talk about every player on a first-name basis, and their family in minute detail. When her team misses a play or loses, she gets irate and loudly curses at the TV. I worry she takes it too seriously.

She’s now bringing her portable TV into bed for late games. Needless to say, thinking about baseball in the bedroom has thrown a curve to our marital bliss. When I bring up the interference, she argues that “most husbands” would be thrilled to be married to a “Gamer-Babe.” Can you referee this disputed call?

STRIKING OUT IN SAN FRANCISCO

DEAR STRIKING OUT: Tell your sports-obsessed wife that while most husbands would be thrilled to be married to a “Gamer-Babe,” she isn’t married to one of them. Tell her

you love her, but you are oversaturated with statistics and need her to dial it back. Explain that the portable TV in the bedroom is interfering with your sex life, and if she values your marital relationship, she will respect that. Don’t wait. Take your stand now, before baseball season starts again.

P.S. In self-defense, arm yourself with new interests of your own because I have a feeling you are going to need them.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

DEAR ABBY: I have a lovely life -- a wonderful husband and five caring children entering adulthood. I have a successful career I am well compensated for. The problem I face is that at 47, my health is such that I live every day in debilitating pain. I spend my energy getting through my day and evenings, and weekends in pain and recovering from my work week.

My husband is understanding, but friends and family don’t understand. I don’t know how much longer I can continue this, but I don’t know how to give up a well-paying career without which my family’s quality of life would considerably change. Any advice would be greatly appreciated.

TRYING TO REST IN MIDWEST

DEAR TRYING: Whether your friends and family “understand” the challenges you are dealing with is beside the point. I will assume that you have talked at length about

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



this with your husband. Your next step should be to talk with your physician about a referral to a pain-management specialist. If you are unable to find relief there, you may have to take the financial hit. Although it may mean your family will have to make do with less, your quality of life is important, too.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Good advice for everyone -- teens to seniors -- is in “The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It.” To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



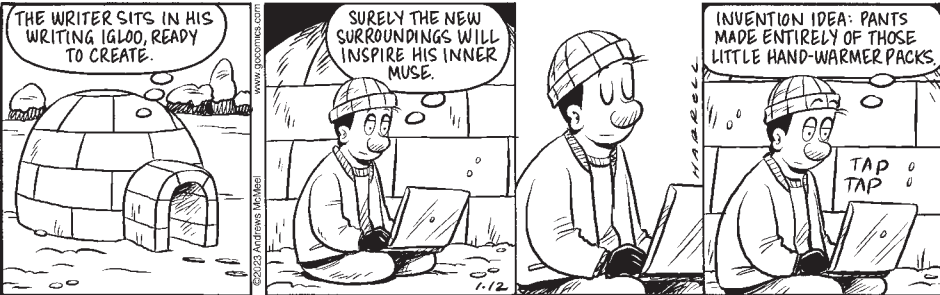
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



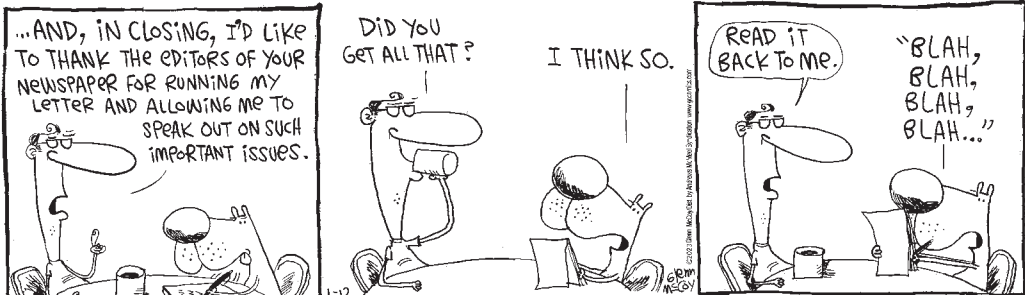
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Desist
5 Dallas
8 Wrestler John
12 Astronomer Sagan
13 Roof ornament
14 Skater's leap
15 Killer whale
16 Actor Billy — Williams
17 GPS suggestions
18 Sesame paste
20 Eccentric
22 "Little piggie"
23 Homer Simpson's barkeep
24 Church service
27 Used a Dyson, say
32 Roman 1051
33 I love (Lat.)

DOWN

34 "Evil Woman"
35 Colombian city
38 Requests
39 Leading lady?
40 Heat source
42 Niche
45 Moving day rentals
49 Make well
50 Wrigley product
52 Future atty.'s exam
53 TV mogul Griffin
54 Hydrocarbon ending
55 — buco
56 Gaelic

10 Must have
11 Too
19 "Forget it!"
21 Outback bird
24 "Tasty!"
25 Pub order
26 Cognac cocktails
28 "— dream—ing?"
29 Ate
30 Antlered animal
31 Coifs
36 Change gradually
37 Bk. after Exodus
38 Not digital
41 Hesitant sound
42 Words said with a sigh
43 Ogler's look
44 "Zounds!"
46 Cold War initials
47 Emit coherent light
48 Pack cargo
51 Popular card game

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterday's answer 1-12

M	A	R	S	L	A	O	A	P	E	D
O	M	I	T	E	D	U	S	A	R	I
P	A	P	A	B	E	A	R	I	S	I
E	L	S	I	E	S	W	A	T	C	H
N	A	I	L	O	N	A				
C	O	P	S	T	E	A	R	B	I	Z
A	R	I	S	C	A	L	D	A	M	A
P	E	T	O	H	S	O	C	R	A	G
			B	R	O	H	E	R	A	
C	R	U	E	T	S		A	R	A	B
H	A	L	L	P	A	P	E	R	B	A
U	G	L	I	U	M	A	O	B	I	T
M	A	S	T	D	I	N	T	A	T	S

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Zayn Malik, 30; Issa Rae, 38; Sam Richardson, 39; Oliver Platt, 63.

Happy Birthday: Speak with passion and let your persuasive wisdom convince others to join you on your journey this year. Use your persuasive powers and charm to get what you want this year. Don't let the little things get to you when the big picture dictates how to reach your destination unscathed. Trust, moderation and well-thought-out plans will lead to victory. Your numbers are 5, 11, 19, 23, 31, 34, 46.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Verify information before passing it along. Don't cut corners; prove your point, and enlist the help of someone who can help you complete what you set out to achieve. Don't be daunted by interference or uncertainty. Choose the most inviting path. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You'll get a mixed message from someone you thought you knew well. Don't hesitate to ask questions. An acquaintance will make a comment that will refresh your memory and motivate you to rely on experience to make a wise decision. ****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Choose to make things happen. Set the pace and see who contributes and who can keep up with you. A well-rounded, organized group can make a difference. Take a position of leadership, but give others the freedom of choice regarding creative expression. **

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Assess confusion and chaos at home and work, then consider the facts and figures. Be responsible for your decisions. Base your answers

and commitments on truth and your ability to use your skills and knowledge to conquer whatever you encounter. ****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Step into the spotlight, and something good will unfold. Discuss ideas with people who share your sentiments to find a clear passage to a brighter future. Don't put up with poorly run operations that take advantage of people. Romance is favored. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Your attention to detail is remarkable but time-consuming. Balance and structure are essential if you plan to get the most done in the shortest period. Critical suggestions will not motivate others. Don't be an outsider; be part of the solution. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You'll have difficulty keeping a secret. A change you desire won't be shared by those who share your space, but self-improvement projects will get a high five. Make personal gain a priority, and pay attention to looking and feeling your best. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Your reputation and integrity are in danger. Make sure the information you share is genuine and verified. A direct approach will spare you from being put in a vulnerable position. Discuss your prospects with people you can count on for assistance. ****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Emotions and reality will clash if you aren't straightforward. Spread your wings and try new things. Showing interest in what others do will motivate you to excel in economically trending skill sets. Go above and beyond the call of duty. **

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Breathe deep to get relief. You know what you must do to start the party. Embrace the highs and lows with enthusiasm, positivity and the people you know will make your dreams come true. *****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Be open and offer your services to those who need help or count on you for truth and justice, but do your own thing when it comes to home, family and personal gain. A new dietary plan or fitness routine will pay off. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Sign, seal and deliver the goods; a positive change will occur. An opening that becomes available is a perfect fit. Make physical changes that reflect new beginnings and potential gain your priorities. Don't let anger defeat or cost you. ***

Birthday Baby: You are proficient, aggressive and original. You are persistent and competitive.

☾: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ☼: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ☼☼: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ☼☼☼: Aim high; start new projects. ☼☼☼☼: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

				7						
7	3							9	1	
4	1							2	3	
				1		6				
1										4
				7		9				
2	6							4	5	
3	5							1	6	
				9						

Difficulty Level ★★ ★

1/12

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Friday's Answer

9	1	6	8	4	5	2	7	3
4	5	3	9	7	2	6	8	1
2	7	8	3	1	6	5	4	9
5	3	1	4	6	9	7	2	8
6	9	2	5	8	7	1	3	4
8	4	7	2	3	1	9	5	6
1	8	5	7	9	4	3	6	2
3	2	9	6	5	8	4	1	7
7	6	4	1	2	3	8	9	5

Difficulty Level ★★ ★

1/11

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

'BIG SKY' (TV SERIES)

Solution: 7 letters

G A J E N N Y B R I S B A N E
E M O L E T I E K D E W E L L
R D B R I A N S T O N E N O L
A E A H N T R A V I S E A S E
G D P J C A S S I E E R N T I
H E A E G N N R D R E N O S N
T E D E N T Y E G S A W H O R A
Y N L O G A N L S U M M O O D
L Y I S N I L A A L T Y O H J
L R N T S A S J V L O V E R S
A E D E H N E H C I K Y L I E
W H O S I R E A I V Y D O C M
T T R E R L N E C A R G A K A
E A L I E L E V I N E S S E J
M K E N N E D Y E F F A H A M

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1/12

Anja, Brian, Brisbane, Cassie, Cody, Danielle, Dedee, Denise, Dewell, Geraghty, Grace, Helen, Horst, Hoyt, Jade, Jag, James, Jenny, Jerrie, Jesse, John, Kathryn, Keitel, Kennedy, Kleinsasser, Kylie, Legarski, Levine, Lindor, Logan, Lost, Love, Lynch, Mahaffey, Marshall-Green, Metwally, Omar, O'Nan, Pena, Rick, Ryan, Savic, Sets, Show, Stone, Sullivan, Ted, Town, Travis

Yesterday's Answer: Wardle

The New Treasury 50 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Leonard, Clippers hold off Doncic, Mavs to snap 6-game skid



LOS ANGELES (AP)—Kawhi Leonard scored a season-high 33 points, Norman Powell added 27 and the Los Angeles Clippers snapped a six-game losing streak Tuesday night with a 113-101 victory over the Dallas Mavericks despite 43 points from Luka Doncic.

It's the fourth time in the past five games Leonard has scored at least 24 points. He got off to a quick start with 11 in the first quarter as the Clippers led throughout.

Doncic, who sat out Sunday against Oklahoma City due to left ankle soreness, missed four of his first five shots and had 12 points on 3-of-9 shooting in the first half before getting hot.

The NBA's leading scorer had 20 points in the fourth quarter and got the Mavericks within 104-96 on a 3-pointer with 2:50 remaining, but Leonard answered with a 3 of his own to push the margin back to double digits.

Doncic responded with another jumper from beyond the arc before Leonard was fouled on a 3-point attempt from the corner. Leonard hit all three free throws to make it 110-99 with 1:40 remaining.

The Clippers had a 35-33 lead in the second quarter before going on a 27-9 run over a seven-minute span as Powell led the way with 11 points.

Los Angeles went into halftime with its largest lead of the game at 69-47.

Suns 125, Warriors 113

In San Francisco, Mikal Bridges had 26 points, nine re-



Los Angeles Clippers forward Kawhi Leonard, right, shoots as Dallas Mavericks guard Frank Ntilikina during the first half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2023, in Los Angeles.

bounds and five assists and the undermanned Suns dominated in Stephen Curry's return from injury as Phoenix beat the Golden State Warriors for a third time this season, 125-113 on Tuesday night to snap a season-worst six-game skid.

Former Warriors guard Damiion Lee received his championship ring in a pregame ceremony from brother-in-law Curry, then scored 22 points and grabbed seven rebounds against his former team. He converted six free throws over the final 1:13 and went 14 of 14 from the line overall.

Duane Washington Jr. scored 21 points, Dario Saric contributed 19 points, nine rebounds and seven assists and Torrey Craig had 12 points and 14 rebounds

for a deep Phoenix team missing four of five starters and six of eight rotation regulars.

Curry came back from an 11-game absence with a partially dislocated left shoulder to score 24 points on 8-for-22 shooting. Klay Thompson had 29 points with six 3-pointers—four 3s and 14 points in the first quarter alone. Jordan Poole's 3 with 1:28 remaining cut it to 117-111, and he scored 27 points.

While Warriors coach Steve Kerr noted, "to go 6-5 without Steph is an accomplishment," the reigning NBA Finals MVP couldn't do it all against a Phoenix team missing injured stars Devin Booker, Chris Paul, Deandre Ayton and Cameron Johnson. The Warriors have lost three in a row

after a season-best five-game winning streak, wrapping up an eight-game homestand that matched the longest in franchise history.

Heat 112, Thunder 111

In Miami, Jimmy Butler's three-point play with 12.9 seconds left capped an NBA-record performance by Miami in a victory over Oklahoma City.

Butler's free throw made the Heat 40 for 40 from the foul line, breaking the 39-for-39 mark by Utah against Portland on Dec. 7, 1982.

Butler was 23 for 23 from the line, tying the second-most makes without a miss in NBA history. James Harden made 24 without a miss for Hous-

ton on Dec. 3, 2019, and Dirk Nowitzki made 24 without a miss for Dallas in a playoff game against the Thunder on May 17, 2011. Dominique Wilkins also went 23 for 23 in a game in 1992.

Butler had 35 points for Miami, which had used only eight players and was down to seven when Dewayne Dedmon was ejected in the second quarter. The Heat were without four regular starters—Tyler Herro, Bam Adebayo, Kyle Lowry and Caleb Martin—along with reserves Duncan Robinson, Omer Yurtseven and Nikola Jovic, all because of injuries.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 26 points for the Thunder. Josh Giddey had a triple-double—18 points, 15

with 29.7 points per game and shooting a career-high 55.9% from the field. Durant passed Dominique Wilkins to move into 14th place on the NBA's career scoring list earlier in Sunday's game.

Now the Nets will hope to better withstand his absence, believing they are better balanced than last season under coach Jacques Vaughn.

"The strength of our team is us picking each other up and just being ready for whatever's thrown at us," teammate Kyrie Irving said after the game.

The Nets play again Thursday when they host Boston in a nationally televised showdown. If Durant can return soon after the next evaluation, he could be ready to play in the Feb. 19 All-Star Game in Salt Lake City. The current leading vote-getter among Eastern Conference frontcourt players had to miss the game because of injury last season.

rebounds and 10 assists.

Jazz 116, Cavaliers 114

In Salt Lake City, Donovan Mitchell had 46 points in his return to Utah, but the Jazz rallied late behind Jordan Clarkson to beat Cleveland.

Clarkson scored 32 points, including five 3-pointers, and had nine straight down the stretch to fuel a decisive 13-0 run.

Mitchell, who spent his first five seasons with Utah, also had six assists and three steals. Darius Garland added 21 points and six assists for Cleveland.

Lauri Markkanen had 25 points and 16 rebounds for the Jazz. Malik Beasley, Mike Conley and Nickeil Alexander-Walker added 13 apiece as Utah won for just the second time in nine games.

76ers 147, Pistons 116

In Philadelphia, Joel Embiid rocked braids and had 36 points and 11 rebounds, James Harden added a second straight triple-double and Philadelphia routed Detroit.

Harden finished with 16 points, 15 assists and 12 rebounds.

Embiid returned from a three-game absence with a sore left foot with a new look. But it was the same dominant performance out of last season's NBA scoring champion.

Two days after Harden also had a triple-double in the 76ers' victory at Detroit, the Sixers raced to a 24-point lead in the first half.

Saddiq Bey, Jaden Ivey and Rodney McGruder each scored 17 points for Detroit.

Magic 109, Trail Blazers 106

In Portland, Ore., Franz Wagner scored 29 points, Wendell Carter Jr. added 20 points and 10 rebounds and Orlando beat Portland.

Paulo Banchero added 19 points for the Magic. They were coming off a 115-101 loss at Sacramento the night before.

Damian Lillard had 30 points for Portland. The Trail Blazers have lost four straight.

Raptors 132, Hornets 120

In Toronto, Pascal Siakam scored 28 points, Gary Trent Jr. had 24 and Toronto beat Charlotte for its second straight victory.

O.G. Anunoby had 22 points, matching his career high with six 3-pointers. The Raptors made a season-high 20 3-points in 44 attempts.

Terry Rozier scored 33 points and LaMelo Ball had 24 points and a season-high 14 assists for Charlotte. The Hornets lost for the fifth time in six games.

Nets' Durant out at least 2 weeks with sprained right knee

NEW YORK (AP)—Kevin Durant has a sprained right knee and the Brooklyn Nets say he will miss at least two weeks.

Durant was hurt Sunday during the third quarter of the Nets' 102-101 victory in Miami after the Heat's Jimmy Butler fell into his knee. Durant grabbed at his knee and briefly remained in the game before asking to come out and going to the locker room.

He had an MRI on Monday that revealed an isolated sprain in his medial collateral ligament. The team said he would be re-evaluated in two weeks.

Durant has led the Nets to 18 wins in their last 20 games and a 27-13 record, a game behind Boston for the best record in the NBA.

He missed 21 games last season when he sprained his left MCL in January — also when a player fell into him —



Brooklyn Nets forward Kevin Durant warms up before an NBA basketball game against the New Orleans Pelicans in New Orleans, Friday, Jan. 6, 2023.

and the Nets fell apart. They went 5-16, tumbling down the standings, and their poor play without him contributed to


Durant's disappointment with the franchise and trade request over the summer.

Durant eventually rescind-

ed the request and has been playing some of the best basketball of his career this season. He is sixth in the league

Source: Correa spurns Mets, reaches \$200M deal with Twins

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

 Carlos Correa has reversed course again, bringing him back to where he started in the most convoluted free-agent negotiation in baseball history.

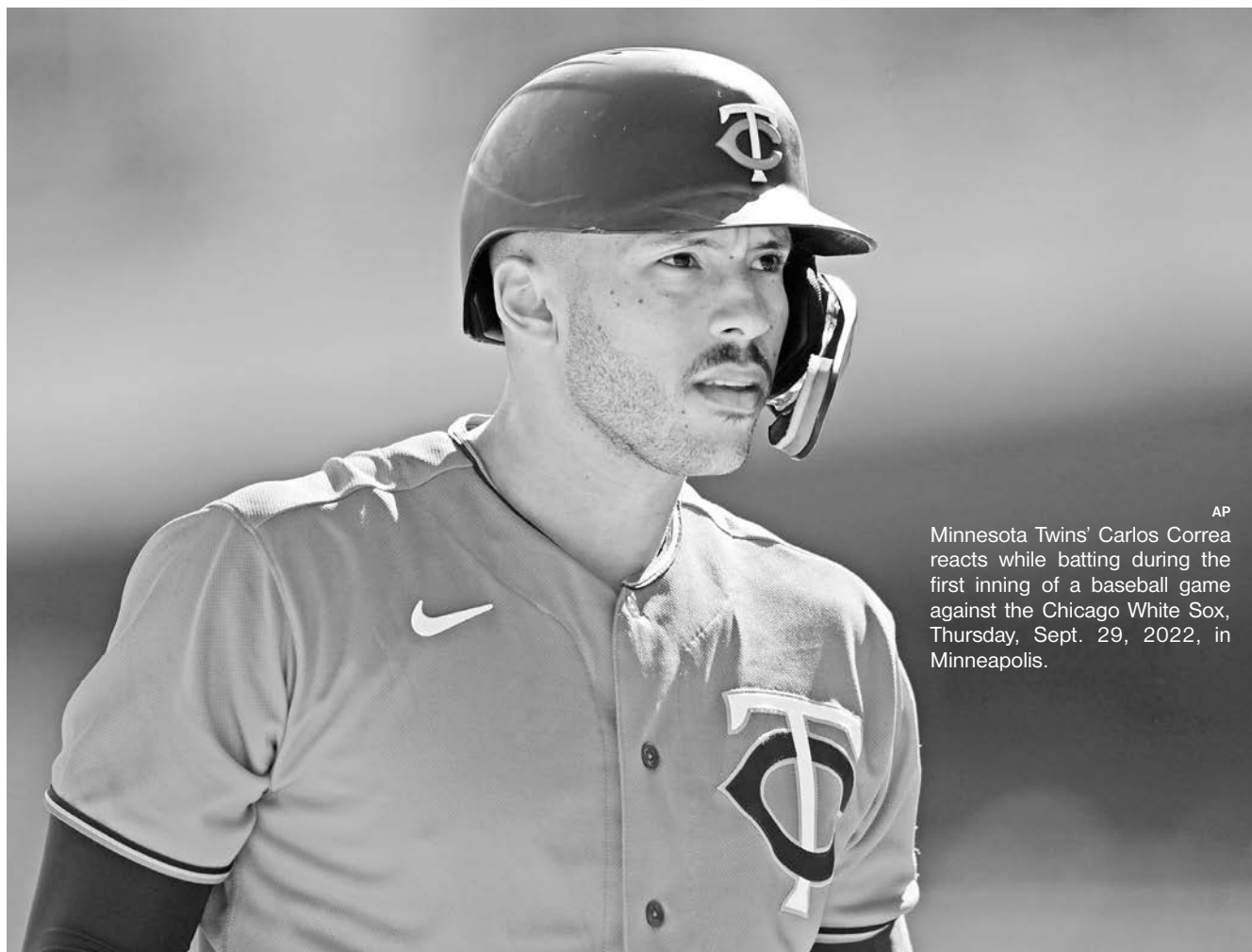
Correa agreed Tuesday to a \$200 million, six-year contract that keeps him with the Minnesota Twins after failing to complete deals with the New York Mets and San Francisco Giants, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because no announcement was made.

The agreement for the All-Star shortstop could be worth \$270 million over 10 seasons if Correa remains healthy. The contract is subject to a successful physical, and Correa was in the Minneapolis area on Tuesday for the physical, the person said.

More than 100 free agents negotiate contracts each off-season, and letters of agreement routinely are signed by agents and clubs that are subject to successful physicals. A player goes for exams and tests at a team-selected medical facility, club physicians review the results and the team finalizes the contract, which then is reported to Major League Baseball and the players' association.

While 99% of deals follow that path, Correa and agent Scott Boras twice reached agreements that collapsed, an unprecedented twist for a star.

Correa agreed Dec. 13 to a \$350 million, 13-year contract with the Giants, who scheduled a news conference a week later to announce the



AP
Minnesota Twins' Carlos Correa reacts while batting during the first inning of a baseball game against the Chicago White Sox, Thursday, Sept. 29, 2022, in Minneapolis.

deal, then called off the announcement hours before it was set to begin over concerns with a right ankle injury Correa sustained in 2014.

Correa agreed that night to a \$315 million, 12-year deal with the Mets, and high-spending owner Steve Cohen even confirmed the pending agreement. But the Mets also had concerns about the ankle after a Dec. 22 physical and held off finalizing the agreement while attempting to negotiate protections over the next two weeks.

The deal with the Twins reached Tuesday calls for an \$8 million signing bonus,

half payable next month and half in February 2024, and salaries of \$32 million in each of the first two seasons, \$36 million in 2025, \$31.5 million in 2026, \$30.5 million in 2027 and \$30 million in 2028.

Minnesota's deal includes team options for \$25 million in 2029, \$20 million in 2030, \$15 million in 2031 and \$10 million in 2032, salaries that would become guaranteed if Correa has 575 plate appearances in 2028, 550 in 2029, 525 in 2030 and 502 in 2031. The contract could be worth \$225 million over seven seasons, \$245 million over eight

years and \$260 million over nine seasons.

Correa's options also could be triggered by a top-five finish in MVP voting, a Silver Slugger award or World Series or League Championship Series MVP. He gets a no-trade provision.

New York's deal guaranteed \$157.5 million over the first six seasons, the person said.

Following Correa's December physical for New York, Mets chief legal officer Katie Pothier proposed that Correa be subject to an annual physical starting after the 2028 season. The physical would be directed by a doc-

tor of the team's choosing and Correa would have to demonstrate he was capable of physically performing to his top potential the following season offensively and defensively, the person said.

Pothier did not immediately respond to an email from the AP seeking comment.

While the guaranteed money kept decreasing in each successive agreement, the average annual value increased from \$26.9 million with San Francisco to \$33.3 million with Minnesota. New York's deal originally would have guaranteed \$210 million in the first eight seasons.

Correa left Houston and joined the Twins last offseason for a \$105.3 million, three-year deal that included opt-outs after each season. He pulled out of the deal after making \$35.1 million in 2022 to chase a longer-term contract.

Boras maintained last month that the player's 2014 surgery to repair a broken right tibia should not have been an issue. Dr. Kevin Varner, chairman of the Department of Orthopedics at Houston Methodist Hospital, operated on Correa.

Boras in prior years had worked out medical issues in contracts for Ivan Rodriguez and Magglio Ordonez with Detroit and for J.D. Drew and J.D. Martinez in Boston, specifying time on the injured list or a season-ending injury that would eliminate the guarantee.

Correa, the first overall pick in the 2012 amateur draft and the 2015 AL Rookie of the Year with Houston, has a .279 batting average with 155 homers and 553 RBIs in eight major league seasons. He also has been a stellar postseason performer with 18 homers and 59 RBIs in 79 games, winning a World Series title in 2017 with the Astros.

The two-time All-Star and 2021 Gold Glove winner raved about his time with Minnesota and how much he and his family enjoyed the community, maintaining all along the Twins were in the mix even with the bigger spenders pursuing him in a particularly lucrative offseason for shortstops. Xander Boegarts, Trea Turner and Dansby Swanson all struck it rich, too.



NEW YORK
(AP)—Buffalo Bills safety Damar Hamlin plans to support young people through education and sports with the \$8.6 million in GoFundMe donations that unexpectedly poured into his toy drive fundraiser after he suffered a cardiac arrest in the middle of a game last week.

He will also use proceeds from the sale of new T-shirts, emblazoned with "Did We Win?" along with his hands in the shape of a heart, to raise money for the trauma center in Cincinnati that treated him. Hamlin, who live-tweeted through his team's victory over New England on Sunday, tweeted Tuesday that he has returned to Buffalo but is still in the hospital being evaluated.

The 24-year-old has teamed with The Giving Back Fund, a nonprofit that helps athletes

Damar Hamlin's toy drive: What's the plan for the \$8.6M?

and celebrities manage their charitable giving, to host the "The Chasing M's Foundation" Charitable Fund. GoFundMe representatives told The Associated Press the crowdfunding platform will soon transfer the donations that have come in since Hamlin's injury Jan. 2 to the new fund. Chasing M's is Hamlin's apparel company.

Hamlin and his family "are humbled by the tremendous support that has been shown as he recovers," according to his marketing representative, Jordon Rooney. "They are incredibly grateful for the continued prayers and outpouring of concern that has been exhibited by people all over the world," Rooney wrote in an email, adding that they plan to communicate with donors over time. The new fund is now soliciting donations on-

line and via text.

"We are working as a team to facilitate the transfer as soon as practical," said the Giving Back Fund. It plans to disclose the final total of all donations, which include support from star quarterbacks Tom Brady and Russell Wilson. As a fiscal sponsor for the donations, The Giving Back Fund is compensated for collecting the funds. The University of Cincinnati Medical Center did not respond to a request for comment.

Hamlin's injury and recovery have created a boomerang of solidarity within the football community with fans donating, players honoring him and Hamlin tweeting appreciation back at all of them.

The largest public donation to Hamlin's GoFundMe as of Tuesday was \$33,333 from the Staten Island, New York-based ADCO Electrical Corp.

Owner Gina Addeo didn't want to give an interview, but the donation itself shows support — repeating Hamlin's jersey number five times.

Similarly, Carl Fochler decided on a donation of \$25,003 on behalf of the sustainable laundry company Sheets Laundry Club he co-owns. He stayed up late the night of Hamlin's injury waiting for an update on his health. The next morning, he logged on looking for news and saw a link to a video of Hamlin talking about his fundraising for kids.

"I just knew right then it's something we had to do," he said, after talking with his business partner.

Fochler said he was born in Buffalo and adopted at six weeks old, adding another reason, besides being a die-hard Bills fan, to donate to Hamlin's work to give children

hope.

"I know how lucky or unlucky you can be. Paths can change quickly," Fochler said.

Anna Isaacson, the NFL's senior vice president of social responsibility, was watching the donations roll in, even as Hamlin's health remained the priority. She began reaching out to "make sure that we all surrounded Damar and his family with the resources to really take on this massive project, which is going to be millions of dollars worth of contributions back to youth in the community."

The league's Player Health & Safety team is already reviewing their practices and policies following Hamlin's injuries, which Isaacson said was part of their responsibility.

"People are watching our games and we have fans all over the country. And with

that comes a responsibility to give back and to use these moments, often tough moments in time, and challenges to impact our society for the better," she said.

Fochler hopes the Bills make it to the Super Bowl, a dream for him and many fans. Asked how he was making sense of a moment with so many emotions mixed together — of watching a terrible injury and then the rebound of generosity, he said Damar had already made sense of it for him.

Pointing to a tweet where Hamlin wrote that he'd rather be running out of the tunnel at the start of the game with his teammates but, he said instead, "God Using Me In A Different Way Today."

"When he wakes up and gets back to being Damar, and sees over \$8 million," Fochler said, "he's got a lot of planning to do and it's just going to be good vibes everywhere."

San Nicolas: We look forward to bigger things in the future

By LEIGH GASES

leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The start of the new year brings with it new goals and with the debut of HD Weightlifting CNMI, head coach and weightlifting gold medalist Angel San Nicolas sets high hopes and plans for the young athletes in his team.

After an impressive stint from the young lifters in their first competition during the Northern Marianas Cup Weightlifting Tournament last Saturday, San Nicolas said that “we look forward to bigger things in the future.”

One of the biggest bids that he has for his team this year is for them to be part of the CNMI National Weightlifting Team and to be able to compete in the Micronesian Games and the Pacific Games. “Their [lifting] technique is well refined and it can be better, but they’re more than ready.



Jaden Andrew completes a clean & jerk lift during the Northern Marianas Cup Weightlifting Tournament last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

LEIGH GASES

SSC

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think we will start seeing it start to pay dividends,” he said.

After finally returning to the pool consistently in May, Sikkell said their competitive swimmers have been showing steady improvement already and he expects even bigger strides in their future.

“A nice cherry on top of the cake of course is having some of our swimmers be able to attend the World Aquatics World Championships in Budapest and Lima. There are several big events coming up in 2023 and SSC and NMI swimming will be represented well,” he said.

As far as challenges, at the risk of sounding like a broken record, Sikkell said the sport’s biggest challenge continues to be the lack of pool space since the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool closed down in Marpi a couple of years back.

“We currently accommodate around 70 swimmers, but the demand for lessons is through the roof. I get calls almost daily from parents wanting to enroll their kids, but due to the pool size and space we cannot accommodate them.”

He added that if SSC had a full-sized pool that is available during regular day time hours, they would be able to accommodate many more swimmers.

“That said, we make due and we are very grateful to Green Flash and PIC for allowing us to use their facilities, their staff is super helpful and we love working with them.”

As for events in 2023, Sikkell said SSC will be staging the following: the Meek and Mighty Swim, Escape from Managha, and Pau Pau to Tanapag as well as help swimmers qualify for the FINA World Championships in Fukuoka, the Micronesia Games in the Marshall Islands, and the Pacific Games in the Solomon Islands.

Sikkell also thanked the SSC board, the swimmers’ parents, and the Northern Mariana Islands Swimming Federation for their continued support.

“We have tremendous sup-

port from our parents who bring their kids to swimming on time, come out for time trials to cheer, etc. The SCC board is ever supportive of our coaching staff and of improving the level of swimming, promoting the club, and the sport of swimming. Last but not least SSC receives a lot of support from NMISF and its programs. Together we aim to raise the level of professionalism of swimming in the NMI. Hopefully we will see more swimmers continue swimming in college and increase the CNMI footprint in the world of swimming.”



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Swim Club coach Richard Sikkell said the lack of pool space continues to be the biggest challenge for the sport of swimming in the CNMI.

They can and they’re very capable of representing CNMI,” said San Nicolas.

“The intent is to get a couple of them into the national team for this year, and rightfully so because we don’t have seniors for each weight category, so I feel it’s rightful that [they] put a junior or a youth to fill in that spot... and a couple of the youth in the HD Weightlifting CNMI should make the team as they’ve been working so hard,” said San Nicolas.

The 10th Micronesian

Games will be held in July 2023 in Majuro, Marshall Islands, while the 2023 Pacific Games will be held in Honiara, Solomon Islands between Nov. 9 and Dec. 2, 2023.

“I would like the exposure for our kids. They put in the work and they deserve that platform. I understand they only want to put seniors but a lot of these youth and juniors, they put

in more work—six days [a week] and imagine, they go to school and they have chores... but they’re spending their time with me and vice versa. So, I really need the community to be behind the sport. We need to gain as much support as we can get as a part of our campaign for this year,” said the four-time gold medalist of the Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022.

After the young athletes joined their first qualifier last Saturday, San Nicolas and some members of the HD Weightlifting CNMI are now looking forward to the 2023 Youth, Junior, Senior Olympic Weightlifting Championship in Guam on Feb. 25.

San Nicolas added that he wants Jaden Andrew, a 13-year-old weightlifter that he coaches, to participate in the 2023 IWF World Youth Championship in Durrës, Albania from March 25 to April 1. “Hopefully, the [CNMI Weightlifting] Federation can consider sending him,”

said San Nicolas. “I want some of them to have international exposure. That’s a part of the experience. We don’t have to wait for them to be seniors. The [CNMI Weightlifting] Federation just has to do their job in selecting and their due diligence in sending athletes to major competitions,” he added.

Andrew competes in the 55-kg category and San Nicolas said that he’s one of the lightest competitors, but that he can squat almost 300 lbs. “I intend to groom them the best that I can until they reach the senior level.”

San Nicolas then gave thanks to Jason Sablan from Get Fit CNMI for the training facility for their HD Weightlifting CNMI team. “I want to give a shout out to those guys because they’re a very big factor into the progress and the body of work of our kids because if it weren’t for them, our kids would have to be paying gym memberships.”

EAGLES

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SCS and Francisco M. Sablan Middle School both have a 1-7 card.

The double-elimination championship tournament starts today, Jan. 12, and will continue tomorrow, Jan. 13, with the championship games set for Saturday, Jan. 14.

VALENCIA

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The board also welcomed its newest member with Yulia Aleksenko now part of the TRAC leadership.

Valencia said initially he didn’t want to accept the nomination to replace Castro as secretary general because of his busy schedule. However, he relented when TRAC officers and members egged him on to fill in the big shoes left by Castro.

“It’s a big responsibility being the secretary general but I’ll do everything in my power to continue the good work Ricky Castro did for TRAC. We will be busy again this year as we will not only be organizing our regular races, but also will start preparing for the Pacific Games in the Solomon Islands in November.”

Aleksenko, for her part, welcomed her election to the TRAC board and like Valencia said she will try her best

to not let them down.

“If the board chooses me then they believe that I can be helpful. From my childhood sport that has been a part of my life and my family, I will be glad to help develop and organize triathlon events,” she said.

Sitchon, meanwhile, congratulated Valencia for his new position and welcomed Aleksenko to the board. He also thanked the rest of the reelected board for once again answering the call to serve the triathlon group.

“Jojo indeed has big shoes to fill as Ricky was really aggressive with promoting TRAC’s activities. But to TRAC’s credit, our activities for the year have already been mapped out as we needed to submit our set of scheduled activities to Oceania Triathlon as requirements.”

As for Aleksenko, Sitchon said she was already helping TRAC even as a regular member so she will become more valuable now

that she’s part of the board of directors.

He added that having a woman on the board was also suggested by Oceania Triathlon to break the gender barrier in the sport.

As for Antonio, Diyco, and Omampo, the TRAC head said everyone is happy and satisfied with the performance of the old set of officers that’s why they were reelected.

“At least we already know how everyone works. It’s like a basketball team. The longer you stay together the more familiar with each other you become and just a wink of an eye you already know what’s the play,” he said.

TRAC was instrumental in helping stage the triathlon events of last year’s Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022 on Rota where the team of Aleksenko’s son, Isaiah; Leo Wania; Kathy Ruszala; and Heather Brook took the bronze medal in the run-swim-run event.



Leonard, Clippers
hold off Doncic,
Mavs to snap
6-game skid
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San Nicolas: We
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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Eagles, Tatagas are top teams in MS v-ball

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Grace Christian Academy Lady Eagles and the Tanapag Middle School Tatagas are the Top 2 teams as they defeated their respective foes Tuesday night in the continuation of the NMIVA-PSS Interscholastic Middle School Volleyball League 2022-2023 at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The high flying Lady Eagles, with a rotation of Llyana Libut, Sofia Gomez, Ella Hall, Dianna Zheng, Ana Villagomez, Misako Ota, Nevaeh Camacho, Sarah Lim, and Miley Mafnas, are heading into the postseason with an eight-win and no-loss record after they defeated Cha Cha Ocean View Middle School.

The Tatagas, led by Erica Zanduetta, Jayme Vargas, Wynona Blas, Hailey Benavente, Karmel Lucas, Rhodalyn Zanduetta, Lana Taule, Kashlie Aguon, and Carmen Wenio, have a 7-1 record after they beat Mount Carmel School.

The Lady Eagles made light work of COVMS in two swift sets, 21-4, 21-7, as the Lancherus' lack of commu-

nication caused confusion on their returns. The Lancherus were unable to recover and make up for their mistakes as the Lady Eagles' ace serves brought them quickly to match point.

In the game between the Tatagas and the Knights, the Tatagas kept the Knights at bay in two sets, 21-10, 21-14. The Tatagas' ace serves buckled the Knights' knees and turned their knuckles white as they were not able to hit decent returns. Eventually, a miscalculated play from the Knights handed the Tatagas' second set win.

In other results that night, the Saipan International School Geckos received their sixth win after defeating the Hopwood Middle School Hi-



LEIGH GASES
Grace Christian Academy's Ana Villagomez goes for a return during their game against Cha Cha Ocean View Middle School on Tuesday in the continuation of the NMIVA-PSS Interscholastic Middle School Volleyball League 2022-2023 at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

litis, 21-12, 21-16; Dandan Middle School won against Saipan Community School, 21-11, 21-11.

HMS has a 5-3 card, while DMS is at an even 4-4; MCS and COVMS are both at 2-6; See EAGLES on Page 19

SSC embraces more pool time

increase in pool time afforded by Pacific Islands Club Saipan and Green Flash Dive Shop.

"It is a privilege to be able to offer swim lessons to as many swimmers as we do. Saipan Swim Club managed to increase its pool time and

space at Pacific Island Club in addition to our four-day commitment at Green Flash Dive Shop to allow for as many swimmers as possible to enjoy our swimming lessons."

He said with more pool time, it opened the opportu-

nity for SSC to further develop its grassroots program.

"Our grassroots program has really taken off and we have a long waiting list of swimmers waiting to enter the program. These little ones are the swimmers of the future and we want to make sure we invest just as much time and effort in their development as we do in our elite swimmers."

Last year also saw SSC welcome two new coaches—Christian Villacrusis and David Roberto—who used to swim for SSC.

"We also attracted two former SSC swimmers to help with the coaching which allows all of us to focus more effectively on providing the specific support our swimmers need. We have assembled a great coaching team and I

See SSC on Page 19

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Unlike Sixers great and Basketball Hall of Fame inductee Allen Iverson, members of the Saipan Swim Club apparently don't abhor practice.

That's why SSC coach Richard Sikkell embraces the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Swim Club members after practice in the Saipan lagoon in this file photo.

Valencia is new TRAC secretary general



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jojo Valencia, standing right, has been elected as the new secretary general of the Triathlon Association of the CNMI.

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The Triathlon Association of the CNMI has a new secretary general after Jojo Valencia was voted to replace Ricky Castro who bid the islands adieu last November for a new life in the U.S. mainland.

Valencia was voted secretary general during the TRAC election last December where Manny Sitchon was also reelected president along with board members Florence Antonio, Jay Diycio, and Ambet Omampo.

See VALENCIA on Page 19